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ABSTRACT

Particularly in the area of community resource development and public issues, Extension personnel in recent years have had to deal with an increasing amount of conflict as professional educators. Extension workers with limited training in conflict management have had to cope with situations usually involving the nature of the problems, the data and information available, establishment of goals, alternative policies for goal achievement, allocation of scarce resources, and vested interests of individuals, informal groups, organizations, and communities. As a follow-up to a 1977 North Central Region Staff Development Workshop on Coping with Conflict, it was decided to develop a resource publication for staff development which would contain the major workshop presentations regarding social conflict. These papers relate to (1) social conflict in community resource development and public policy education, (2) the nature of social conflict and how it operates, (3) understanding conflict strategies and developing skills to deal with it, (4) managing stress in conflict situations, (5) coping with conflict among organizations, and (6) the role of the educator's values in conflict intervention. A final section presents an annotated bibliography of selected resources for dealing with social conflict. (BRR)

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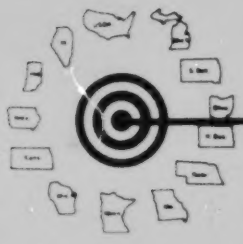
Coping with Conflict: Strategies for Extension Community Development and Public Policy Professionals



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COPING WITH CONFLICT: STRATEGIES FOR EXTENSION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY PROFESSIONALS

North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

108 Curtiss Hall

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa 50011

February 1979

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FOREWORD

In recent years Extension professionals have had to deal with an increasing amount of conflict as professional educators. This has been particularly true in community resource development and public issues. These controversial issues cover a wide range of topics such as food and agricultural policy, energy, land use, environmental quality, consumerism, and governmental organization and operation. These issues cut across all levels--local, area, state, multi-state, national and international.

Controversy over community resource development and public policy issues often exists among the individuals, groups, and organizations served by the Extension Service. Conflict usually involves the nature of the problems, the data and information available, the establishment of goals, the alternative policies for goal achievement, the allocation of scarce resources, and the vested interests of individuals, informal groups, organizations, and communities.

Recognizing the limited training opportunities in coping with conflict which has been provided to Extension workers in the past, three North Central Regional Committees proposed a regional workshop in 1976 for professional Extension workers concerned with CRD and public policy educational programs. These three regional committees were the North Central Region Public Policy Committee, the North Central Region Community Resource Development Committee, and the North Central Region Extension Sociology Committee.

With the support of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, representatives of the three committees developed and submitted a training proposal for a North Central Region Staff Development Workshop on Coping with Conflict. This staff development proposal was approved by the Extension Directors in the North Central Region in September 1976.

The planning committee for developing the proposal included Clarence Cunningham, Assistant Director, Staff Development and Program Analysis, Cooperative Extension Service, Ohio State University; Charles Gratto, Extension Economist, Iowa State University; Gordon Guyer, Director of Extension, Michigan State University; Hollis Hall, Director of Extension, South Dakota State University; John Holik, Extension Sociologist, University of Missouri; Everett Peterson, Extension Economist, University of Nebraska; Jerry W. Robinson, Jr., Extension Specialist in Sociology, University of Illinois; Gordon Rose, Program Director, CRD and Public Affairs, University of Minnesota; and John L. Tait, Chairperson, Extension Sociologist, Iowa State University.

A core staff was selected from the planning committee to implement the proposal. It included Clarence Cunningham, Hollis Hall, Everett Peterson, Gordon Rose, and John L. Tait, Chairperson. In addition, W. G. Stucky, Iowa State University, served as workshop coordinator.

The North Central Region Staff Development Workshop on Coping With Conflict was held May 16-19, 1977, at Illinois Beach Lodge, Zion, Illinois. It was sponsored cooperatively by three North Central Regional Committees on Public Policy, Community Resource Development, and Sociology, the

North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, and the Directors of Extension in the North Central Region.

Each state in the North Central Region was encouraged to select a team of from three to five members to participate in the workshop. Sixty-nine participants representing thirteen states and the Federal Extension Service attended the workshop. The Extension services of the North Central Region which participated in the workshop were Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Kansas, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. In addition, a team participated from the Pennsylvania Extension Service.

The objectives of the staff development workshop were to (1) enable professional Extension workers to increase their awareness of social conflict and how to cope with it so education can occur in controversial CRD and public policy issues, (2) increase the capability of professional Extension workers in identifying emerging controversial issues and to function more effectively in conflict situations, and (3) enable the professional Extension workers to serve as resource leaders in initiating, planning, and developing staff development training on coping with conflict for other state, area, and county Extension staff within their respective states. In addition to the main subject matter content, the workshop format included pre-workshop involvement, developing and analyzing a conflict situation, applying strategies to typical Extension conflict situations, and developing preliminary plans for staff development workshops on coping with conflict withhin their respective states.

The main subject matter content of the workshop included (1) social conflict in CRD/Public Policy education, (2) the concept of social conflict

and how it operates, (3) the strategies and skills needed for dealing with conflict, (4) the role of values in conflict intervention, (5) coping with conflict among organizations, (6) managing stress in conflict situations, (7) developing staff development workshops relating to coping with conflict for Extension personnel, and (8) administrative considerations in maintaining our university base of support.

The resource leaders for the workshop included Charles E. Donhowe, Dean of Extension, Iowa State University; Gerald E. Klonglan, Chairperson, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Iowa State University; Louis Kriesburg, Professor of Sociology and Chairperson, Department of Sociology, Syracuse University; James H. Laue, Director, Center for Metropolitan Studies, University of Missouri-St. Louis; Charles Mulford, Professor of Sociology, Iowa State University; Ronald C. Powers, Director, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, Iowa State University; Jesse Taylor, Mediator, Community Relations Service, U.S. Department of Justice, Chicago; and John Terronez, Conciliator, Community Relations Service, U.S. Department of Justice, Chicago.

As follow-up to the workshop, it was decided to develop a resource publication containing the major presentations which were presented to the workshop participants. Although not presenting all of the materials used at the workshop, the major objective for this publication is to present the major resource papers regarding social conflict. Following are resource papers relating to (1) social conflict in community resource development and public policy education, (2) the nature of social conflict and how it operates, (3) understanding conflict strategies and developing

skills to deal with it, (4) managing stress in conflict situations, (5) coping with conflict among organizations, and (6) the role of the educator's values in conflict intervention. Finally, the last section presents an annotated bibliography of selected resources for dealing with social conflict.

This publication may be used in several ways to enhance staff development. First, the content may be used by individuals designing staff development workshops as resource materials for developing program content. The content might be supplemented with other resource materials such as cassette tapes, films, case studies, and workshop activities. Second, the publication may be used as a pre-workshop reader for participants in conflict training workshops. Finally, the publication can serve as a resource for the professional educator who is concerned about enhancing his or her understanding of conflict and how to cope with it. This publication should also help the professional in beginning to develop his or her skills for dealing with conflict situations. It also raises significant questions which each of us needs to ask about our values as educators and the influence these values have in affecting how we respond to conflict situations.

John Tait, Chairperson
Coping with Conflict Workshop

SOCIAL CONFLICT IN COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION

by

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SOCIAL CONFLICT IN COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION

Introduction

This workshop, entitled, Coping with Conflict, makes me believe that Extension is becoming a mature organization in the best sense of maturity. Only a short while ago it would have been quite unacceptable to have seriously proposed such a workshop to be sponsored and attended by extension staff; something akin to proposing a sex education course in the schools a few years ago. Even this workshop experienced some of the long-standing concern in its developmental stages as the title was changed several times. The word conflict was put in, taken out, and finally put back in by a group of us who decided we should call it what it is.

Others on this workshop program will address themselves to the concept of social conflict, helping all of us to better understand the different types of conflict and the ways in which this social interaction process is different from other processes such as competition, boundary maintenance, and the like.

I view episodes of social conflict as a normal product of human interaction, not a failure. I am primarily interested in calling attention to the need for extension educators to be willing and able to fulfill an educational role in situations where social conflict has developed or is developing. We should be able to serve as educators in the situation where the clientele has divided into two or more points of view just as we do when all are of the same persuasion, albeit more care will be necessary and strategies may be different where conflict is present.

In short, we cannot afford to be sloppy in our educational role where conflict exists. Related to this is our capacity to be educators when we, as an organization, are one of the parties involved in the conflict. In this latter case I believe we will often discover that such conflict occurs because of strategic errors in program development and/or implementation. The "cure" for this problem is likely to be different than the case where we are a "third party."

As Loomis [5], Boulding [2], and Mack [6] indicate, conflict is a social process found almost everywhere. Yet, for most of us, myself included, it is not a process or situation which we purposely seek out or generally attempt to create. Indeed, we often exert considerable energy to avoid or suppress conflict in our day-to-day interaction. In our extension educational roles many of us have probably avoided program opportunities where the possibility of conflict was fairly high. Nevertheless, most of us have probably experienced some examples of conflict in our educational roles that were unpleasant, thus persuading ourselves to be more alert the next time and not be drawn into such an arena.

My hopes for this workshop include the objective of becoming much more comfortable and competent in conducting eductational programs in those areas where people are divided on an issue as well as those issues where some (or even all) people believe Extension should not be providing information. In our own state we have had this topic on the in-service training agenda for two years because of the perceived need to increase our skills in programming in areas of conflict. We have postponed it each year -- but now I'm quite certain we will be able to follow through.

The program committee for this workshop felt that someone should speak to the general topic of social conflict in CRD and public policy education as a means of more or less setting the stage for the remainder of the workshop. This is my primary task this afternoon. The rest of my remarks will be generally organized around the following points:

1. Are there any controversial issues related to Extension's role?
2. The philosophy of CRD/PA in Extension.
3. The consequences of involvement or noninvolvement of Extension in controversial issues.
4. Some of the responses used by Extension in dealing with conflict situations.
5. Challenges we face in preparing ourselves as professional educators to deal more effectively with conflict and to cope with it in our educational programming.

Are there any Controversial Issues?

The rationale for this entire workshop rests on the assumption that there are controversial issues and that many of these are relevant to extension. I would like to nail that assumption down.

An Upper Midwest Council study, Emerging Forces in Conflict, identified 209 emerging forces that 300 panelists in the upper midwest thought would be relevant during the next 10 years [7]. Commenting on the highlights of the study, the authors wrote:

> These forces individually and collectively suggest conflict and change can be anticipated during the next 10 years. Many changes will be substantial, almost unprecented. Expectations of change are unusual in view of the normal human tendency to view the future as an extension of the present. Change will be associated with

> resistance. Conflict appears as a recurring theme throughout the forces identified by the panelists -- resource utilization appears to be the area of primary conflict. Significant, also, are the conflicts over human service demands [7; p. i-ii]. (Emphasis added)

There we have it. Conflict related to natural resources and human services -- both areas clearly within the charter of the Extension Service and not just the CRD/PA program area. The study makes two additional points relevant to these conflicts which are also relevant to the role of the Extension Services:

The study suggests two primary needs:

> First, decisions are needed . . .
>
> Second, improved decision making processes are needed to accomplish necessary changes. Present processes tend to react to problems when emerging forces strongly suggest the need for anticipatory action [7; p. ii]. (Emphasis added)

Both of these needs are directly related to our mission.

The substance of the forces suggested as being conflict evoking in nature are further evidence of the relevance to extension. Here are just a few of the "forces" judged to be most accelerating in the next 10 years:

1. World-wide food demands will place greater strains on agricultural production in the upper Midwest.
2. There will be a continued emphasis on development of new energy sources such as solar and nuclear fusion.
3. The increasing number of elderly in the population will place severe pressures on social security and other income maintenance programs.
4. Increasing costs of energy will influence business and consumer choices in almost all areas of life.
5. Conflicting demands for water resources will result in increased competition among agricultural, industrial and commercial uses.

6. Government regulation and involvement in energy development, pricing and distribution will rapidly increase [7; p. 43].

Clearly, every one of these has conflict built into it. These forces also have educational needs built into them and in areas of expertise long claimed by Extension. Public policy specialists, agricultural production specialists, family life specialists, nutritionists, community development specialists, housing specialists -- all could be involved in these emerging issues areas.

Extension Philosophy in CRD/PA Education

We all know the basic liturgy of Extension. Various components of it include such phrases as: start where the people are, respond to felt needs, involve the people in assessing their needs, provide the information but let them make the decision, evaluate alternative solutions, and the like. As a broad statement we can take pride in having a fair degree of faithfulness to these precepts over the years although in many instances we should recognize that we clearly supported the technological option that was superior in results. As our knowledge of secondary and tertiary effects of utilizing certain technologies improves and alternative solutions are developed, we find that such instances of "clearly superior" choices are somewhat rarer and even then subject to question and conflict. This type of conflict is somewhat new in agriculture but has long been a part of the scene in family living, community resource development and public affairs.

In CRD/PA the prevailing philosophy is to provide the best possible information to those involved in making decisions and to refrain from advocacy for a particular course of action. In public affairs, adherence

to this notion has been necessary for survival and clientele credibility.

I cannot really improve over the recent discussion of basic phiolosophy in public affairs offered by Gratto, Eldridge, Ogg, and Wallize in the book, Heritage/Horizons: Extension's Commitment to People [3]. I would commend their article, Public Affairs -- Still Testing the Jeffersonian Hypothesis, to you. I have taken the liberty to excerpt a few passages from the article for our purposes.

> At the base of the 200-year public affairs education stem is a node of philosophy formed during the development of our Constitution and Bill of Rights. At that time, a bitter argument occurred between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton about the role of the citizen in participating in governmental decisions.
>
> Jefferson held that democracy can only function if the average citizen is fully informed and has a voice in the major policy decisions of the government [3; p. 175-176].

These Jeffersonian views prevailed in the establishment of the land grant system of which we are all a part. A particular quote from Jefferson is my favorite and lies at the heart of the philosophy which I believe guides CRD/PA education:

> I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves: and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with wholesome discretion: the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion.

Philosophy, of course, is a rather grand statement, usually at a general level and aimed at broad goals or values around which relatively less conflict exists then occurs around choices of means to achieve the goals.

Gratto, et al go on to discuss public affairs methodology, i.e., the operationalization of the philosophy. Although the following represents considerable "borrowing" on my part, I believe it will help illucidate

some views about public affairs philosophy and methodology that will be helpful to us:

> The history and development of public policy education methods and philosophy are probably as important as the topics. In fact, it was the development of public affairs techniques that even allowed discussion and programming of certain subjects.
>
> The reason for the concern over methods and approaches is because public policy deals with issues. An issue occurs only when there's disagreement. Consequently, issues are, by their very nature, controversial, and public affairs education deals with controversial subjects. These subjects can generate highly emotional responses among clientele. Most of the issues have no right or wrong answer in terms of customary criteria of measurement . . . that is, a legal right or wrong, a moral or religious right or wrong.
>
> The center of controversy usually revolves around outcomes -- someone gains and someone else loses. Hopes for those ideal solutions where everyone is satisfied seem to have faded with the frontier and the onset of complexity. Many of the issues are concerned with the difference in basic values, often liberalism versus conservatism.
>
> But one characteristic of issues allowed Extension to "put a handle" on them. Most often the controversy in issues centers on the means of solution -- not the ultimate goal. This basic agreement concerning the problem, the need for a policy, or the ultimate goal allows Extension to work from areas of agreement, making it possible to explore objectively the nature of the situation producing the problem and to pose alternatives.
>
> Still, the differences in means vary greatly between farm organizations or between vested interest groups on particular issues. The discussion climate often is tense, emotional, and controversy-laden. Only Extension educators with considerable skill in concealing their personal views were able to survive this type of climate.
>
> Those who did survive developed an educational method that deals with alternatives. The problem is explained, the cause of the problem is discussed, and as many alternatives as seem relevant to the situation are explained with their advantages and disadvantages. No attempt is made to recommend a particular solution or to have the audience or participants commit themselves to a position. Meetings are kept on an informal basis with a distinct effort made to examine choices and to avoid advocacy.
>
> Extension hasn't strongly used the adversary principle, though that concept has been an important model in our 200 years of

democracy. The adversary position is the philosophy of courtroom prosecution and defense. The advocates of one position make their point, the advocates of the opposite position do the same, leaving the listeners, or jury, to make up their minds. The adversary principle often makes it confusing for the average observer who wants to be informed. When given only one side of the argument, the average citizen becomes suspicious of the vested interest viewpoint. More and more, people want objective analysis of facts and principle. The adversary approach also tends to close people's minds toward a solidified opinion.

This is where Extension public policy specialists fill a void. At first, participants in Extension's public policy education were suspicious. From historical observation, they believed that no one became involved in controversial discussion unless he or she had an "ax to grind." After a few years and several programs, citizens began to accept the Extension Service of the land-grant university as an objective source of information about public policy alternatives.

In the concept of Jeffersonian democracy, the task of informing the public on decisions on policy issues places heavy reliance on a free press and on political debate. An informed electorate still must depend primarily on the freedom and objectivity of the media and on advocacy of particular choices in political debate.

Educational institutions like Cooperative Extension can usually be only supplementary of the media and political debate. In some instances, however, Extension has been the primary source of data that lifts the quality of political debate [3; pp. 178-180].

Although this statement was developed primarily from the perspective of public affairs, it seems appropriate and consistent with the philosophy of the total extension program, particularly in those issue areas where conflict is likely to occur.

Consequences of Extension's Involvement/Noninvolvement in Conflict

The consequences of noninvolvement may be the easiest to speak about because it seems unlikely that any viable and useful system devoted to disseminating new knowledge could ever be completely uninvolved with conflict. But some try! My own view is that an extension system that purposefully avoids issues and arenas where conflict exists is doomed to

mediocrity, or a kind of long-term sentence to being average. Such a system might be without detractors of sufficient numbers to cause problems in funding and programming, but it might also have insufficient numbers of supporters among those who count when the chips are down. Viable, growing organizations must serve emerging needs and issues and incur some risk because the alternative of being "safe" is, in reality, also risky.

The consequences of Extension being involved in an education role in conflict issues depends upon several factors:

1. The time in the conflict (i.e., issue) cycle when extension becomes involved. In general it is easier to define and establish educational credibility before the parties to a conflict "harden" their position.
2. The type of issue, i.e., is it an issue where we have expertise to offer. The worst strategy would be to plunge into an area where we have no useful knowledge.
3. The kind of conflict. It is conflict between specific organizations or coalitions of groups formed around the particular issue? Is it between just a few individuals? Is Extension a party in the conflict? The answers to all of these questions will help clarify the consequences of becoming involved in the issue and suggestive of strategies to minimize negative consequences.
4. The basic reasons for the conflict. Is it due to misinformation or lack of information? Is it primarily on means, or is it about ends? Is the basic disagreement already reduced to value

differences? The answers to these questions have implications for the potential of an educational effort.

The kinds of consequences of becoming involved in conflict issues can be several. On the negative side for example:

1. The individual extension faculty could be penalized by those who determine his salary and/or tenure.
2. The entire Extension Service could suffer a decline in its support base (funding) if the conflict is widespread and involves the opposition of major support groups.
3. Conflict within the organization can develop to the point that morale is low and agreement and positive program efforts begin to suffer.

On the positive side:

1. Extension may be looked to as a "third party" who can provide objective information or provide a forum for bringing together parties to the conflict.
2. Supporters may opt for added funding because of the service they feel is rendered by Extension in increasing the quality of public dialogue about major issues.
3. Increased educational opportunities with new clientele groups may result from effective performance in past sensitive issues.

Extension responses to conflict

The responses which Extension has made to controversial issues in the past has varied tremendously from state to state, issue to issue, and time to time. I am not aware of any formal study in this matter.

A study by Bonnen on The Role of the University in Public Policy Education provides some perspective regarding past response to controversial issues [1]. His study did not focus on Extension's role, but rather, the entire unviersity. The study grew out of President Johnson's 1965 challenge to universities to assist in solving the urgent social problems of society.

Bonnen generally found the response of land-grant universities to public policy education wanting in relation to their potential. He states:

> In recent years I have written several papers highly critical of the way that we in the land-grant system manage our affairs. I said essentially that we were failing to realize our potential by so wide a margin as to almost constitute malfeasance, and that we were allowing our institutions in agriculture and in the land-grant system to grow obsolete . . .
>
> In case after case of university involvement in societal problems of research and outreach systems, our potential far exceeds our performance . . . People on the outside now seem to have a better appreciation of this than we have . . .
>
> The prospect is exiciting . . . If we fail to respond, not only will the land-grant tradition, I think, greatly lose in luster, but the university will likely cede to other, yet unknown institutional forms, its role as the knowledge center at the cutting edge of society's problem solving.
>
> That is the nub of the problem. Those who have been deeply involved in the land-grant tradition have a contribution to make which is potentially staggering -- if we will but grasp it [1; pp. 6-7].

More casual observation of Extension's response to conflict tells me that we are generally disposed to avoid it if at all possible. Staff are implicitly, sometimes explicitly, advised to stay out of issues (school reorganization, land use, consumer education, family planning, energy siting, annexation, etc.) which have potential for conflict.

Countering that response pattern has been an increasing commitment of staff and time to public policy issues in recent years in a number of states. The overall picture is not clear. What I suspect is the case that Extension is becoming more involved in conflict issues because more and more of the areas in which we teach (and in which we have always taught) are becoming controversial. I also believe that our actual behavior as educators is a bit more progressive than our initial attitudinal response would suggest. That is, we go through a ritual of exploring ways to avoid involvement in a conflict situation, but eventually, if the issue is one where we really have expertise to offer and we sense some legitimacy by supporters, we do become involved in an educational role.

Our response to controversial issues differs of course, depending upon how close we are to the fire. County and area staff are less able to withdraw to a position away from the conflict. This is predictable and understandable and should be utilized as background in developing an overall programming strategy in those issues where conflict exists.

The individual's reasons for avoiding fulfillment of an educational role in a conflict situation needs to be analyzed. There are, I believe, different "cures" to be prescribed, depending upon the reason(s) a person has for avoiding conflict. For example, a person may be avoiding the potential educational role in a controversial issue for one or more of the following reasons:

1. The person may be so totally committed as a private citizen to one solution or point of view that he/she cannot bring himself/herself to objectively present alternatives.

2. The person may be unable to cope with antagonistic behavior (conflict) between individuals at a meeting, or between himself/herself and others.

3. The person may perceive (and accurately sometimes) that to be involved in such a program will result in personal loss (e.g., salary, social status, etc.).

It is my hope that we will find out in this workshop how to approach and resolve all of these reasons for resisting involvement in conflict issues.

Challenges We Face

Former Extension Service Administrator, Edwin Kirby, outlined several chalienges and opportunities in public policy at the 25th national public policy conference in 1975. Among other important points, he stated:

> The time has come for extension to expand its efforts in public policy education . . . In the final analysis, citizens will decide issues concerning centralized versus decentralized government control, food and population, environment and safety, energy, world trade, subsidies versus producing for the open market, rural-urban population balance, employment and other opportunities for improved living in rural United States, and many other matters. Our basic extension role is to provide information to help citizens in understanding issues, making sound decisions and getting decisions implemented [4; p. 120].

Later in his paper, Kirby stated:

> People need help in reconciling the conflicts and apparent inconsistencies in these policy objectives . . .
>
> The demands of our extension audience for policy education have have changed. The audience wants more sophisticated information on a much wider range of issues . . .
>
> . . . What I am proposing is that we consider the 16,500 extension staff members as public policy educators in selected areas [4; 122-123].

The substantive issues (food, energy, etc.) mentioned by Dr. Kirby and the suggestion that all staff become involved -- coupled with the fact that public policy education is almost always associated with conflict certainly sets the challenge out quite clearly. If we are to be effective educators in the future on matters of relevance we are going to be conducting education in a variety of conflict arenas. To do that well we must draw upon the experiences of those on our staffs who have been effective in such efforts and upon greater insight and competency to deal with the conflict process itself by most, if not all, staff.

I will be a participant in this workshop like all the rest of you, trying to pick up ideas for training our staff and for handling our educational task in areas of controversy. Thus, I would like to close with some challenges to the rest of our resource people. It is my hope that when this week is over that:

1. I will have a clearer understanding of the concept of social conflict.
2. I will be able to analyze a proposed educational program in such a way as to anticipate the kinds of conflict and take steps to effectively deal with it -- or even reduce it.
3. I will be able to work effectively when confronted with various conflict situations.
4. I'll be able to contribute to the development of an effective training program for extension faculty.

To achieve those objectives, I will have to help, so will the rest of you. Together we can have a great week and go away prepared to deal with this area in our training and programming.

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SOCIAL CONFLICT: WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT OPERATES

by

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SOCIAL CONFLICT: WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT OPERATES

We will be able to maximize our effectiveness, as a partisan in a conflict or a third-party intervenor, insofar as we understand the way social conflicts develop. That understanding comes from reflecting upon our own experience, sharing other personal experience, and reviewing research findings about struggles. This paper is so based. I will sketch out conceptions of social conflicts, their dimensions, stages, and consequences, emphasizing aspects pertaining to community conflicts.

Definitions

We all know what a conflict is; we have all witnessed and participated in many of them. But like many important and familiar words, we have difficulty agreeing with others about how to define the term. When we get into disagreements about definitions, we realize that there are alternative formulations and these alternatives have important implications. There are two significant issues in varying definitions of conflict: whether or not awareness is necessary and whether or not coercion is a necessary component.

Some writers, such as Karl Marx (1910) and Ralf Dahrendorf (1959), consider conflict to exist aside from awareness. They see class differences as objectively constituting a conflict: for example between the owners of the means of production and the wage earners or between those with power and those without. Most analysts of social conflicts, however, consider consciousness to be essential (Weber, 1947; Coser (1956). If people do not think of themselves as being in conflict, they may be

in competition or they may be in a latent or potential conflict, but they are not in a social conflict.

Some writers include hostile feelings or coercive acts in their definitions of social conflict (Coser, 1956; Robinson and Clifford, 1974). We often do think that conflict must entail violence or coercion, or threats of them, or desires to hurt or injure the adversary. But other students of social conflicts think it is analytically useful to separate how people feel toward each other in a conflict from how they conduct a struggle (Boulding, 1962; Kriesberg, 1973). After all, we can hurt others without feeling angry at them and as partisans in a fight we sometimes apply coercion rationally and dispassionately. Even with the greatest violence, as in bombing missions in war, feelings of hatred and anger may not be involved by anyone in the mission. Furthermore, we can and sometimes do use noncoercive inducements to get the other side to yield to us when we are in conflict. For example, we may try to persuade them to do so.

I think it is most useful to define social conflict as a relationship between two or more parties (or speakers for the parties) when they believe they have incompatible goals.

Dimensions of Social Conflicts

Social conflicts are infinitely variable. Each one is unique, but there are some similarities in types and patterns. We will outline some of the dimensions along which social conflicts vary and consider variations in their bases, parties involved, means used, and outcomes. This will help us understand in which way a particular conflict is like and

unlike others and help us determine to what extent we can generalize experience and findings from one fight to another.

Bases

Any particular social conflict is based on a mixture of consensus and dissensus, of agreement and disagreement, of interests and values. Concensus may be the basis of a fight when both sides want the same thing and believe that what they want is scarce and limited so that if one gets more, the other gets less. Note, both sides share the same value. Thus, they both may want more money or more power and each side believes it must get more at the expense of the other side. For example, in some current disputes about the construction of nuclear power plants, some adversaries may agree that nuclear plants would make a contribution to increasing the desired supply of energy, but they disagree about where the plants should be built or who should pay for their development.

Social conflicts also are based to varying degrees on dissensus: the parties disagree about what is desired or what is valued. This can be the basis for a conflict -- when one side insists that the other side believe as it does or act in conformity with its value. Thus, if we know the true path to religious or to political salvation and insist that nonbelievers follow our precepts, and they do not choose to follow the enlightened way we are showing them, then we have a social conflict. We may refer back to a possible controversy about the construction of a nuclear power plant to illustrate how dissensus or differences in values could be the basis for a fight. Suppose one side values ever-expanding

energy consumption and industrial production and another values preservation of the natural environment and conservation of energy. Then, we have social conflict based on differences in values.

Whether a social conflict or a struggle is based on a large component of value disagreement or on agreement about what the adversaries seek has implications for the way the adversaries mobilize support and pursue the fight. It also has relevance for the way in which the conflict might be resolved. For example, if differences in interest are at stake, it is easier to envisage outcomes in which compromises are struck and the shared desires are divided between the adversaries. For dissensual conflicts, conversions or the development of new norms of tolerance may be one kind of solution. It also is likely that without compromise one side will be able to realize its goals and the other side may seek victory in another struggle or tend to withdraw from social relations with the side which imposed its will.

Parties

In community conflicts the adversaries are often not clearly defined or well organized. Some long-established organizations may have generally recognized ways of handling conflict with their counterparts. For example, trade unions, political parties, business associations, and others may be regarded as legitimate by each other and by the community as a whole. Conflicts about issues in which established parties contend are quite different from those in which newly emerging collectivities seek recognition for their position and for themselves (Gamson, 1975). Controversies may be especially bitter and difficult to handle when the legitimacy of

contending groups is in question and the rules for conducting the social conflict are not established (Dahrendorf, 1959).

The emerging parties to a conflict often are formed in terms of previous community cleavages (Coleman, 1957). People are mobilized through soical networks and friendship links. This means that the side people take on a controversial issue may appear "accidental." Issues themselves may get formulated in "left" or "right" terms depending on who happened to get involved on one side; then their opponents from previous fights choose the opposite side of the issue. Analysis of controversies about flouridation, abortion policy, and nuclear power plants reveal that similar arguments are used, but by different people (Leahy and Mazur, 1978).

Means

We are most aware of variations in social conflict in the way they are conducted. If large-scale organized violence is employed, we recognize the conflicts as wars and revolutions. Certainly, the presence or absence of physical violence directed at other humans is an important variation in struggles. Some struggles involve nonviolent coercive action. This may be in the form of demonstrations, sit-ins, and strikes (Sharp, 1973). In addition to coercion, violent and nonviolent social conflicts may involve two other types of means: persuasion and reward (Kriesberg, 1973). Partisans of one side may try to induce the other side to yield what they seek by appeals to the other side's own interests and values. This kind of persuasion can be usefully distinguished from the threat of the six-gun "persuader" variety. In true persuasion,

arguments are made to show how there is good reason from the other side's own point of view to agree with the party presenting the arguments.

An adversary may try to induce its opponent to yield what it seeks by proferring a reward. One side may seek to "buy out" the other side. Obviously, the adversary with control over greater resources will have a better opportunity to make such inducements. Collectivities with less material resources or power or prestige may seek to organize themselves so that they have something they can offer. For example, becoming a coherent, solidary group may make it possible for a previously low-ranking category of people to offer their adversary votes or supporting workers at an election; such an offer may be an inducement to gain the conflicting goal they seek.

In any particular struggle, these three modes of pursuing incompatible objectives are mixed together. Conflicts also vary in the degree to which there are rules about how the means are employed. Social conflicts are more or less regulated. If the conflict is highly regulated, we may not even think it is a conflict, e.g., most political elections are not thought of as social conflicts. Popularly, we apply the term social conflicts to relatively unregulated struggles: when the means of coercion exceed the bounds of what is considered fair and normal or when the persuasive efforts of reward are not considered legitimate ones.

When certain issues are regularly contested and established parties regularly contend, the means are most likely to be regulated. It is with the emergence of new issues and new parties to a conflict that the means of contending are not so well regulated. This is one reason that at

present many environmental issues seem to be the subject of social conflicts. The issues are relatively new and some of the contending groups are not recognized as legitimate contenders as has been the case for older issues.

Outcome

Sometimes we use the way a conflict comes out as a way of classifying social conflicts. For example, a struggle is a revolution if the revolutionaries win. More generally, we sometimes classify conflicts in terms of the possible outcomes: must one side win and the other lose (a zero sum conflict) or may both sides lose or both sides win (Rapoport, 1960)? In some conflicts it is possible to envisage four outcomes depending on the policies chosen by the two sides. For example, suppose two governments are in an arms race. If both continue that policy, they both can lose because the arms race is costly to both. If side one stops and side two does not, side one may be at the mercy of the other. Similarly, if side two stops it may be at the mercy of side one. If both sides could agree to halt the arms race, they would both be relatively advantaged (even if neither would be as big a winner as if it continued the arms race and the other side did not).

Many struggles appear to the adversaries to be zero sum. But real conflicts can always be conceived to be nonzero sum. One way is to divide up the issue in contention into many smaller issues; the conflict is fractionated (Fisher, 1964). Then, one side may "win" on one subissue and "lose" on another; they can trade off a number of benefits. A zero-sum conflict can also be converted into a variable-sum conflict

and into a win-win outcome by embedding the conflict into a larger context (Sherif, 1966). For example, two contending groups may begin to emphasize some common interest they share against a third party or think they can increase the material resources available to both of them by cooperation. In such cases the issue in contention between them may be seen as one among many matters of both contention and cooperation.

To what extent a conflict is zero-sum varies in the course of a struggle because adversaries often change their goals and modify their relations with each other. Indeed, each dimension of conflict we have noted can and does change as a social conflict runs its course.

Stages and Processes of Social Conflicts

Every struggle has a beginning, a middle, and an end. But every social conflict is part of many other ongoing relations and conflicts. When a particular fight begins and ends is usually indeterminant. As observers or participants, we somewhat arbitrarily mark off different stages in the course of a struggle, and it is useful to do so. It enables us to compare different conflicts and to decide what is likely to happen next and what kind of intervention is likely to have a particular effect. The several stages and processes constituting a cycle or spiral of conflict are objective conflict, awareness processes, conflict modes, escalation and deescalation processes, terminating processes, and outcomes.

Objective conflict

An infinite number of underlying situations exist, but only a few of them emerge into awareness and become a social conflict. Thinking

of all our identities and grievances, we could become embroiled in many more fights than we do. Facilitating conditions have to combine with the underlying circumstances to produce a social conflict. This assumes that there is a realistic basis to social conflicts and that is a useful assumption to make. It is true that a person may feel angry for many different reasons and "take it out" on somebody who an observer would say has nothing to do with causing the anger. Yet, for a social conflict to emerge, people must share ideas about who or what is responsible for their grievance; irrational displacement of the feelings is therefore less likely. In any case, there can be real causes for a social conflict even if the protagonists seem to define each other's responsibilities for the causes inaccurately according to an observer's views.

Emergence processes

For a struggle to arise from an objective conflict situation, (1) two or more parties must begin to think of themselves as identifiable collectivities, (2) they must have grievances, and (3) they must formulate goals which are meant to reduce the grievance. To form a collective identity, a category of people must share enough experience social interaction, and symbolic representations to think of themselves as a group and for others to so regard them. Ethnic, class, ideological, or other values and interests can serve as the basis for group formation. They way others regard the group is also important in characterizing the group. For example, ethnic groups may have definitions of them imposed by others and this helps shape their self-conceptions and the way they formulate their objectives. In many circumstances, of course, pre-existing groups with collective identities are present, ready for a fight.

In addition to having a sense of collective identity, the members of at least one group must have a sense of grievance. According to some standard of judgment, they feel they are not treated fairly and equitably (Gurr, 1970). They may be comparing themselves with their own past and feel they should be getting more than they have at present (Davies, 1962). They may be comparing themselves to others in the society and believe they should have more. They may feel they are doing well according to one social criteria they value yet feel particularly aggrieved because in other ways they are doing much more poorly. Of course, we would expect that lower ranking groups would be most likely to feel aggrieved in these ways. But even high ranking groups can sometimes feel they should have even more. In any case, high-ranking groups have more resources to conduct a struggle and therefore are more likely to formulate goals which will bring them into social conflict. This brings us to the third component necessary for a conflict to emerge into awareness.

In addition to a sense of collective identity and of grievance, a partisan group must formulate an objective which is incompatible with the goals of another group for a conflict to arise. Such objectives are aimed to reduce the sense of grievance by inducing another group to give something up or do something differently. What is cricual here is that a group must believe that it <u>can</u> reduce its grievances. This is one reason why groups which seem to be improving their lot may still make new demands: they now see that improvement is possible and they have additional resources to seek further gains. Groups which are relatively poor in material resources, prestige, or power may enter a conflict

only when they have garnered enough support to make the effort seem viable and when their alternatives seem even worse than the risk of pursuing goals which bring them into conflict with others. When they enter the fray, they may use conflict means which are more intensive than would persons with more at stake to lose in a fight (Fanon, 1966).

Conflict modes

As noted earlier, contending groups may pursue their objectives in three basic ways: by coercion, persuasion, or by rewards. In any particular struggle the partisans use a mixture of these modes. Which strategy is followed and how the different elements are blended together depends on a large number of factors. Some factors are internal to each contending group: for example, what their resources are and what values and experiences they have had using different inducements. Some factors pertain to the relationship between the adversary groups: for example, how well integrated they are with each other and how they feel toward each other. Still other factors are related to the specific issues in contention: for example, what goal is being sought.

Partisan groups may not discuss and weigh all the alternative ways in which to wage their fight. But often, a great deal of thought does go into the conscious selection of a conflict strategy. Even if there is not a conscious choice of a strategy, choices are made in terms of the factors mentioned above. As a partisan and as an observer who may intervene, it is useful to reflect on the alternatives and how well each fits the goals sought and the parties involved.

Escalation and de-escalation processes

Once a social conflict has begun, many processes tend to make the fight escalate: for more people to get drawn in and for the means to become more extreme. There are social psychological mechanisms. For example, once having expended energy and resources to gain an objective, that objective must seem to be worth the effort in order for persons to feel comfortable with themselves. Having invested time, energy, and resources, the commitment to the objective grows and the willingness to increase the time, energy, and resources also grows.

Several organizational changes also occur which make for escalation. Leaders who entered the struggle are particularly committed to its pursuit and to "victory." They are most unwilling to admit having been in error. Militancy is related to competition for leadership (McWorter and Crain, 1967). Furthermore, as a conflict goes on, those leaders who are most adept and most committed to aggressive and coercive means are likely to move into increasingly prominent leadership roles. In addition, the followers also are likely to change, as those with less stomach for the fight tend to drop out while those who enjoy the fray enter. As time goes on, the group can count on more and more willingness to escalate the means used in the struggle.

Changes in the relations between the adversaries also tend to escalate a conflict. Once a conflict is engaged, there is tendency for the issues in contention to expand. For example, a community conflict about books in the library is generalized into a fight about educational philosophies (Shaplen, 1950). Furthermore, previously suppressed issues

are brought into the fight. Once the struggle is on, it may seem to be a good time to "settle accounts." Furthermore, as the fight goes on, communication between the adversaries becomes more and more difficult and infrequent. Other relations, including cooperative ones, get cut. As this happens, it is easier to move to more extreme means against the opposition. The adversary becomes the enemy and in extreme cases is no longer regarded as human.

Conflicts do not keep escalating forever. Somehow they begin to turn around and de-escalation occurs, gradually or swiftly. The very same processes which produce escalation also can make for de-escalation. Thus, the social psychological response to an increasing cost to gain an objective can, at some point, seem too great and then the objective itself is devalued. This might be called the "sour grapes" mechanism. Once we decide we cannot afford something, it is not unusual to decide that we did not want it anyway.

Organizational developments also can lead to de-escalation. As a struggle goes on, it may begin to threaten the existence of one of the organizations. Leaders generally place the survival of the organization above gaining a particular objective and this concern for organizational survival tends to moderate intensification of a conflict. Furthermore, there are alternative leaders ready to take over who may promise an easement of the costs of the struggle. While a conflict is escalating, however, the alternative leaders may take even more aggressive stances against the adversary and push the established leaders toward an intensification of the conflict.

As a struggle continues, there is a tendency for the leaders to insist upon more support and therefore to pressure dissenters. This, in itself, can be a source of dissatisfaction to many of the followers. Such repression can diminish support for the leaders' struggle with an external adversary.

In the course of a struggle, relations between the adversaries also change in ways which tend to de-escalate a conflict. As antagonists, the adversaries can even come to respect each other as they each pursue their goals. After all, social conflict is an important and intense social relationship.

Finally, struggles sometime become more focused as they continue. Diffuse and innumerable possible bones of contention get reduced to a single prominent issue. The narrowing of goals tends to make a resolution more attainable and hence de-escalate the conflict.

Whether these social psychological organization or adversary relations changes make for escalation or de-escalation depends on many factors. It depends on the internal state of the contending parties, the issues in contention, the actions of third parties, and the way in which each side responds to the other. I will only discuss the last-named factor: how one side reacts to the conflict behavior of the other. Fundamentally, each side affects the escalation of a conflict by its reaction to the other side's actions. Suppose one side reacts very fiercely to the other side's conflict behavior. An "overreaction" may provoke further conflict behavior and thus lead to an escalation of the conflict (Morgan, 1970). Sometimes a protesting group may gain sympathy and support

from a wide segment of the population if the authorities react harsly to their actions and then be drawn into the struggle (Debray, 1967). On the other hand, sometimes if the authorities, for example, greatly over react, the protesting group may be intimidated or successfully repressed and the conflict is ended by suppression.

Suppose, now, that one side reacts very mildly to the other side's conflict behavior. An "underreaction" may be taken as a sign of weakness and uncertainty and invite an expansion of demands and more extreme pressures for larger goals from the adversary. On the other hand, a mild placating reaction may cool the heat of the struggle. A group which is met with a mild response may moderate its demands and means of attaining them.

In short, it is possible for underreaction to others' behavior to result in escalation or de-escalation of a conflict. It also is possible for an overreaction to lead to escalation or de-escalation. It certainly is difficult to know whether a group is under or overreacting and whether or not the response is going to be such that the conflict escalates. A skillful tactician makes an estimate of the situation based on as much information as he or she has about each adversary, their relations, and the possible role of many possible third parties. Any third party intervention should be guided by some reflection about the timing of that intervention in the light of likely escalation and de-escalation.

A few general observation can be made about the way in which reactions may tend to escalate or de-escalate a fight. First, if a conflict party responds close to the same level of intensity as the adversary,

the conflict behavior is more likely to be reduced or contained than if there is very great over or under reaction (Gurr, 1970). Secondly, the meaning of any action and reaction is modified by the verbal explanation accompanying it. Thus, if one side justifies its severe reaction in terms of the specifics of the situation and the preference to minimize harm, the response is less likely to be further escalation than if the accompanying verbal explanation is that this is a good opportunity to smash and destroy the adversary. Third, the meaning of the reaction and hence the likely response depends on the adversary's expectations about what level of reaction is appropriate. Finally, the response depends upon how severe the reaction is. An extremely severe reaction may succeed in repressing conflict behavior, while a moderately severe reaction merely provokes antagonism. A very mile reaction may assuage challenge and at least would not in itself be a source of grievance and, therefore, of intensification or expansion of the conflict.

Terminations and outcomes

Once a struggle has begun to wind down, there may be a sudden movement toward terminating the conflict. Terminations may be explicit or implicit. For explicit conclusions, the adversaries negotiate an agreement which marks a symbolic and formal ending of the particular fight; judicial decisions, treaties, contracts, or referendums are such explicit arrangements (Druckman, 1977). But, some conflicts terminate without any explicit recognition: the fight seems to ebb away. Neither party may acknowledge that the fight has really ended. This is most likely

in struggles which were conducted by loosely-bounded groups and about diffuse issues.

Third-party intervention in the role of mediator is most likely in the terminating stages of a conflict. As one or both sides seek some way of concluding the struggle, they may welcome a third party intervenor. Intervenors can assume many roles (Cohen, Cormick, and Laue, 1973). Here, I will only briefly discuss the mediator role. In this role, the intervenor may transmit messages which might otherwise not be received or heard if coming directly from the adversary. A suggested outcome can assume a salience and acceptability which it would not have if offered by either conflict party (Schelling, 1960) A mediator can also facilitate each side venting feelings safely without producing reactions from the other side which would intensify the fight. A mediator may also help the parties gain additional resources so the outcome does not have to be purely zero sum.

Any outcome to a conflict may be thought of as a combination of three dimensions. First, is the degree to which one side imposes its will upon the other or there is a compromise. The second dimension pertains to the possible conversion of one side to the other's views. This may be partial, it may be mutual, and it may involve mutual respect for the other's views. The third dimension has to do with the integration or withdrawl between the adversaries: the degree to which the outcome of a struggle is the separation of the two parties, as in secession, expulsion, or informal mutual reduction of interaction.

As a conflict ends, the parties have generally changed their objectives from what they were at the outset of the fight. This makes it difficult to say that one side has simply imposed its will upon the other. This facilitates the face saving which is often so important in ending a fight and making the outcome stable. That is why, too, a conflict outcome involves some compromises, some changes in ideas which might be regarded as a conversion, and some movement toward less, or perhaps more, integration and cooperation between the adversaries. For example, a community fight about a zoning plan and land use may result in the adoption of a plan that recognizes the interests and concerns of the original opponents of any zoning regulations, more generally shared tolerance for the concept of zoning, and more shared participation in decision making in the community than there had been before.

Every conflict has a unique history. The end cannot be controlled by or be determined by any one party, rather, the two parties, in interaction, shape the course of the struggle and the outcome. In this sense, no party can entirely attain what is originally sought. Even if it could impose its will and destroy the opposition, the action necessary to smash and abolish an opponent would have consequences for the destroyer which would not have been planned or foreseen. Once a fight is entered on, as in any social interaction, the course cannot be fully charted by the parties involved.

Consequences of Social Conflict

In addition to the outcome of a particular fight, a struggle has many indirect and longer-run consequences. These consequences are

often unintended and unwanted by any of the combatants. Other consequences may be regarded by at least some participants as beneficial by-products of an abhorrent struggle (Coser, 1956; Kriesberg, 1973). In this paper, I will only note a few of the indirect consequences of social conflicts.

When we think of the consequences of social conflict, we can consider the consequences of either the way the struggle was fought or of the outcome or we may assess the consequences for the internal conditions of each party, for the relations between them, for each one's relation with third pa ies, or for the larger social system of which they are a part.

The conflict mode used in a struggle tends to provide a precedent for the future. Thus, the employment of violence in a fight makes it more likely to be used again in the next fight (Gurr, 1969). This is generally true, but it is possible that using a particular means was so disasterous that it is avoided as far as possible in future struggles. Thus, marginally unfair tactic in a community fight sets a precedent for even dirtier tactics until one groups exceeds generally shared standards and the tactic brings great dishonor to the group.

One of the most fundamental consequences of the outcome of a conflict is whether that outcome changes the underlying conditions and the circumstances necessary for the emergence of a new struggle. That is, to what extent is the outcome stable and to what extent does it create conditions that breed another fight? An outcome may reduce the sense of grievance which parties feel or reduce their expectation that they

could ever secure redress for their grievances. In either case, new struggles are less likely. On the other hand, a defeat can be a new grievance and the desire to regain lost positions or to get revenge may increase the willingness to expend resources to fight a new battle and, therefore, the chance of a renewed conflict is high.

Of the many kinds of people and relationships which are directly or indirectly affected by a conflict, I discuss only the effects on the internal state of each conflict party. Scholars and researchers have long examined and discussed the effects of external conflict on internal conflict (Simmel, 1955; Coser, 1956; Kriesberg, 1973). These studies have usually been about countries as a whole and the results do not demonstrate any clear findings that external conflict increases internal cohesion and lessens internal strife. Research indicates that overall the relationship is small and that external conflict makes internal conflict more likely, not less likely (Tanter, 1966). But, this varies with type of country. In countries with personalist regimes, primarily Latin American dictatorships, external conflict is moderately related to later internal strife. Among countries with centralized dictatorships, there is no relationship and presumably such regimes can suppress internal dissension. Among regimes with competing political groups, external conflict behavior is related positively with internal turmoil but is negatively related to internal war. Presumably, among legitimate regimes waging a popular foreign conflict, dissent is permitted but it does not escalate into internal war.

Conflict might be expected to lead to more centralization within each contending party. But this, too, depends on several factors. If a group is struggling against a much stronger adversary, is seeking major changes, and is subjected to repressive action, it is likely to develop centralized control and emphasize obedience of the members. This is illustrated by the revolutionary groups in Czarist Russia (Nahirny, 1962 and Selznick, 1952). In more open societies, external conflict requires maintaining constituency support and often entails popular participation. This would work against centralized control. On the other hand, to engage in conflict behavior would seem to favor tight controls and enforced solidarity. The forces working in different directions may be why the relationship between external conflict and internal centralization is not clear. Thus, Tannenbaum and Kahn (1957) studied local trade unions and found no relationship between the amount of union-management conflict and the hierachical distribution of power.

Conclusion

Obviously, in this brief paper, I could only comment on a few aspects of social conflicts. I have tried to provide a general framework within which particular struggles can be examined. I think it is useful to view the whole cycle of conflict and to know about the variations in types of social conflicts. It is useful for the partisans because it enhances their considered judgment about how to pursue their objectives; for example, it is useful for partisans to keep in mind that every struggle must end and they will have to live with the consequences (Ikle, 1971). It also is helpful for possible third party

to think carefully about the best time to enter a fight, and how to do so, depending on the results wanted.

Even this brief discussion should have made it clear that there are many alternative ways in which struggles can and are pursued. The means used in a conflict are important because they are what we experience. The ends are uncertain, and it is best to use means that minimize damage and which, themselves, may be beneficial. Furthermore, different means are appropriate for different ends and they should be thoughtfully employed.

Social conflicts are inevitable. They can never be made to cease nor should they. They are fundamental means by which justice is attained and progressive soical change brought about. But social conflicts generally exact a high price in human anguish and material losses. As parties to a conflict and as intervenors, we should strive to minimize the costs in material resources and human pain and to maximize the benefits of social conflicts.

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COPING WITH CONFLICT: UNDERSTANDING STRATEGIES AND DEVELOPING SKILLS

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COPING WITH CONFLICT: UNDERSTANDING STRATEGIES AND DEVELOPING SKILLS[1]

Conflict is a natural and inevitable part of all human social life. It arises from a number of sources and is dealt with in a variety of ways by social systems.

To "cope" with conflict implies the ability of individuals and organizations to 1) understand its sources and directions, 2) select goals for intervention in conflict, and 3) systematically develop strategies and skills for pursuing those goals.

This paper provides a framework for understanding the strategies and techniques of social conflict intervention and gives special emphasis to the types of roles and skills employed by conflict intervenors. It emphasizes that conflict intervention--or systematic attempts at "coping" with conflict--occurs in a context of desired outcomes for conflict as defined by the intervenors. It recognizes that the goals and processes of conflict intervention can only be understood if one first understands the relationship of conflict to power and social change.

Understanding Community Conflict: Power is the Cause, the Method, and the Goal

After more than 15 years of participating in social change movements and social conflict activities as an activist, researcher, government official, consultant, and professional advocate, I am convinced that the first prerequisite for becoming an effective conflict intervenor is the

[1]Portions of this paper are adapted from Laue and Cormick [5].

ability to understand (and, perhaps more critical, accept) that power is the central reality around which social conflict occurs.

Power imbalances are the basic underlying cause of social conflict.

The exercise of power is the prime activity in social conflict situations.

Power is the goal of parties in conflict--either to maintain it, to take it away from the opponent, or to gain more.

Power may be defined as the ability to control or influence decisions about the allocation of resources in a social system. Resources are the goods and services (including money, votes, facilities, land, productive capacity, health care, levels of education, expertise, etc.) around which human life and social exchange are built. It is important to make the distinction between power and resources when examining any social conflict situation because it makes a great deal of difference whether the parties believe they are in dispute about who gets what when the pie is cut (resources) or who controls the decision-making process about the pie-cutting (power).

The relationship between power and resources may be further illuminated by the following diagram, which indicates that resources are both a basis of power and an object of its exercise. Mobilized resources create operational power, which is exercised in the process of allocating resources.

The case studies prepared by the participants for the "Coping with Conflict" conference illustrated this relationship well. The major resource in question in half of the cases was land, and the disputes concerned the allocation (or "land use") of this scarce and valuable resource. Other resources in question were various energy sources, public transportation, schools, and water. The bases of power for the parties described in the case studies included land ownership, money, educational credentials, position in a Federal or other agency, a network of contracts, information, and expertise.

Social change is the other major concept which must be understood to deal effectively with community conflict. It refers to the continuous process of redistribution of power and resources within a social system. Social change occurs in a variety of ways, but the most dramatic and far-reaching forms of change take place through conflict--because power never (or rarely) gives itself up willingly. I do not believe that one can "give" power or possibly even "share" it. Power can only be developed or taken. Thus, most significant social change (i.e., power and resource redistribution) is accompanied or catalyzed or indeed caused by conflict.

Community Disputes: A Definition and A Typical Case

Community disputes are a form of social conflict. Coser's widely-accepted definition of social conflict is ". . . a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. Such conflicts may take place between individuals, between collectivities or between individuals and collectivities" [2].

Community disputes are a form of social conflict having the following characteristics: They involve two or more parties which have differing goals concerning mutually salient issues. They occur at and between differing system levels. They also are of varying intensity and duration and result in widely varying kinds of termination.

Each community dispute represents a particular combination of these seven dimensions, arising when traditional mechanisms of social control (such as ideology, media, laws, custom, police, or religion) no longer adequately keep natural interest group competition in equilibrium. Equilibrium--often called "community stability" or even "peace"--is maintained as long as two crucial conditions are met:

Power (the control over decisions about allocation of resources) is perceived as legitimate by sufficiently large numbers of persons in the system; and

Resources (goods, services, jobs, facilities, land, etc.) are defined as adequate and their distribution as equitable.

The everyday lifestyle of communities and their institutions may be characterized in terms of these two conditions as falling somewhere along a continuum that ranges from cooperation to crisis:

Cooperation ⟷ Competition ⟷ Conflict ⟷ Crisis

When power is seen as legitimate and resources are adequate, cooperation is the dominant mode of interaction. When the legitimacy of established authority and the adequacy of existing resources or the equity of their allocation are questioned, competition exists. Conflict represents

intensified competition of which large proportions of the system members affected now are aware. Conflict arises when the existing power arrangements are seen as nonlegitimate and resource allocation as inadequate. Crisis occurs when the holders of power being challenged by subordinate groups define the situation as serious enough to take new and unusual action to avoid or minimize what they perceive to be severe costs.

The system level at which the conflict occurs distinguishes community disputes from other social conflicts. There are five levels of social organization within and between which these conflicts may take place: an organization, a neighborhood, an institution (the educational system within a city, for example), a community, or a transcommunity (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area or region, for example). Assorted clients, consumers, constituents, employees, and other "Outs" challenge service professionals, providers, representatives, employers, and other "Ins" for inclusion--student/school, patient/health care system, welfare recipient/welfare system, black neighborhood group/white-controlled planning department, tenant/landlord.

Our focus, then, is most often a dispute within a community rather than a community-wide dispute.

This framework makes a fundamental distinction between personal or interpersonal "problems" (which often are defined and treated in terms of individual pathology or difficulties in communication and relating to others) and systemic problems (which have their root in the distribution of power and resources within the system).

Race and racism are factors in many, if not most, community disputes. Racism is pervasive and particularly malicious in the United States. Because racism has meant the historical exclusion of racial minorities from decision-making processes in American communities, the axis of many community disputes is white/nonwhite, and the issue is power. We have observed that whenever different racial groups are involved in a community dispute--or whenever the projected outcomes will change the shape of the power distribution between white and nonwhites--race or ethnicity becomes the controlling dynamic in the dispute [5].

Every community dispute is a game of power. Power is the issue, power is the goal, and the effective use of power is the strategy for all sides in conflict. And if race is involved, the power struggle becomes more intense, the stakes higher, the sensitivities greater, the duration of the dispute longer, and the outcome less predictable.

The important structural and dynamic characteristics of community disputes may be illustrated by the following composite case: Elmwood Hospital and the Chicano Community Coalition.[2]

> Elmwood is a medium-sized, 450-bed private hospital. It is well-equipped for in-patient care and has an open-heart surgery team which is a matter of special pride. None of the trustees lives in the hospital's service area, although some of their parents once did. Most of the trustees are professionals or businessmen, and their main function is to help in fund-raising.
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> Until five years ago, Elmwood was in the middle of a white, working class community. Now, however, it is on the edge of an expanding Mexican-American barrio which has crossed the

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[2]This case is based on materials prepared by the Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution, New York.

expressway and is moving eastward. A part of the Mexican-American community is served by a public hospital on the west side of the highway. Those on the east, however, are turning to Elmwood. Few private physicians remain in the area, and Elmwood and its out-patient clinic are the main source of medical care for the new minority group residents.

The new residents now make up approximately 65 percent of the hospital's service area. Most are in low-paying service jobs or on public assistance. Infant mortality is three times as high as in the rest of the city. Malnutrition is a problem, as is tuberculosis, lead poisoning, and other diseases associated with a deteriorating urban environment. Most cannot afford to enter the hospital when sick, and consequently rely on out-patient treatment in what is now an overburdened facility.

As with most voluntary hospitals, increased costs have put Elmwood in a financial squeeze. It has become increasingly difficult to attract interns and residents and to retain present professionals. Although the hospital director is somewhat sympathetic to the medical care problems of the surrounding community, he sees his first priority as building the hospital's institutional strength.

Citizens in the surrounding community would like the hospital to increase its almost nonexistent efforts in preventative medical care, to improve and expand out-patient facilities, to establish a satellite health center with day-care facilities, and to train a mobile Spanish-speaking paraprofessional health team to provide diagnostic services throughout the community. "This is what a neighborhood hospital is all about," they say.

A neighborhood group, the Chicano Community Coalition, sent a letter to the director asking that the hospital initiate these efforts and requested that he meet with them to discuss how the community and the hospital could work together. Although the community is deeply concerned about its medical problems and resents the fact that an Anglo institution has not acted before this on its own initiative, the letter was not unfriendly.

The letter was not answered immediately.

A few days after receiving the letter, the Elmwood Board of Trustees announced the acquisition of a site on which it said it would build a heart research facility, a six-story nurses residence, and a staff parking lot.

On learning of these plans, the leaders and members of the Chicano Community Coalition were incensed. About 50 Coalition members came to the director's office and vowed not to leave until the hospital agreed to meet the following demands:

1. Replacement of the board of trustees with a community-controlled board.
2. A 100-percent increase in out-patient facilities.
3. Establishment of a neighborhood health center and daycare facility on the newly acquired site.
4. Establishment of a preventative diagnostic mobile health team, consisting of neighborhood residents chosen by the Coalition.
5. Replacement of the director by a Chicano chosen by the community.
6. Making the hospital a bilingual institution at all levels.

Although the director indicated that he would gladly meet with the group's leader to discuss the matters raised in the letter, he also stated quite forcefully that he considered the new demands arrogant and destructive, and that, in any event, he would not meet as long as the de facto occupation of his office continued.

The Coalition repeated its intention not to leave until a meeting took place and the demands were accepted.

This description offers a broadly representative example of the type of community dispute that is becoming commonplace as citizen groups compete with established institutions (and, often, one another) for control over the allocation of the scarce resources available--whether health care, jobs, space, recreation, housing, education, or other goods, services, and statuses.

1. It involves an ethnic minority, historically a victim of discrimination based on linguistic as well as physical characteristics.

2. It involves a service delivery facility staffed by professionals who believe they are doing good and important work.

3. The dispute is affected by demographic and physical changes in the urban environment which are little understood and certainly cannot be controlled by any of the parties involved.

4. There is a multiplicity not only of issues but of parties (the board, the administration, the various segments of the coalition--and soon, we may assume, additional parties such as physicians, nurses, service staff, outside police, etc.).

5. The resources are perceived as scarce--hospital beds, availability of professional personnel, space and money for research, and (or) patient care.

6. At least one party is considerably weaker than the others in terms of organizational structure, staying power, and the ability to influence the decisions of the others.

7. A simple yes/no solution of the type provided by litigation will not serve the various needs of the parties; rather a package in which all win something is called for.

8. Unilateral determination of the immediate outcome (by the most powerful party, as is typically the case) will not provide a lasting solution; clients and community as well as care-givers must be involved if any solution is to "stick."

9. And, the situation now has escalated to the point where the establishment representatives likely would define it as a crisis.

Given the situation, what are the next steps? What avenues to the solution of the dispute are available? How can options for settlement be kept open--for all parties? These are the questions to which conflict intervenors initially would address themselves and which are treated in later sections of this paper.

A final word about community disputes and conflict before turning to questions of approaches to "coping" or dealing with conflict: all social conflict is highly patterned. Conflict is not the opposite of order; it does occur in regular sequences or stages. This rough regularity is what makes it possible to design effective intervention strategies.

There are a number of ways to determine the stages, sequences, or levels of conflict. They include:

Pre/During/Post

For purposes of planning intelligent intervention, it is important at the minimum to recognize that conflict may be analyzed in at least three broad stages.

Pre. A period in which latent competition in the system is coming to the surface as tension escalates, issues become more sharply defined and parties take stronger positions about the allocation of the resources in question.

During. Conflict is out in the open. The parties are pouring large amounts of energy into pursuit of their goals vis-à-vis the other parties. Tensions are heightened. There is general awareness of the conflict on the part of the affected constituencies. The traditional

mechanisms of social control no longer are able to manage the increasing frequency of challenges by the "Outs" to the "Ins." There are charges and counter-charges. There may be violence.

Post. Tensions and voices are lowered, and some type of accommodation, solution, or at least plateau has been reached. All the parties who are involved in the open conflict now are pursuing more normal schedules and investing a smaller amount of time in their relationships with the other parties. Termination of the conflict has been reached through negotiated settlement, force, litigation, one or more parties dropping out of the field, administrative decision, or some other means.

It is important to view conflict in at least these three phases because the intervention implications are different depending on the stage. In the pre-conflict period, intervenors usually are concerned with preventive activities such as enhancing communication between the parties, seeking joint accommodation, or correcting injustices or structural problems which give rise to disputes. During conflict, intervenors often must be concerned with de-escalation of tensions or control of violence, on-the-street liaison between "Outs" and law enforcement officials, or direct mediation between conflicting parties. In the post-conflict stage (where the parties generally are highly suggestible for a short period of time). intervenors normally are active in attempting to strengthen newly-developed relationships, assist in solidifying any reallocations of resources involved in a solution, and other ameliorative/preventive work.

The Seven C's: Change through conflict and crisis

In my work derived from research on the sit-in movement in hundreds of southern cities in the 1960s, I developed a model that describes in greater detail the stages or phases through which conflicts go as the parties pursue victory or accommodation [4]. These seven stages may be viewed as an expansion of the basic pre/during/post categories, with more attention to the dynamics of movement from one stage to another. The stages communities have transacted in working out changes through conflict all operate against a background of natural, ongoing interest group competition. In brief, they are:

a) Challenge (the open and dramatic presentation of demands and grievances by minorities or "Out" groups, usually as a last resort after less-public approaches have failed to bring about change).

b) Conflict (intensified competition and community awareness, with an accumulation of challenges now breaking through to the surface as traditional mechanisms of social control no longer are able to manage the challenges).

c) Crisis (exists when persons with the power to change the institutional patterns under challenge define the situation as severe enough to demand immediate action and rapid resolution).

d) Confrontation (recognition on the part of the powerful that the challenging group has legitimate demands that no longer can be explained away or repressed and must be dealt with).

e. Communication (direct, face-to-face negotiations between the challengers and the dominant group or groups, each now bargaining from a position of power).

f. Compromise (a result of the bargaining of the previous stage, involving the fashioning of a resolution which customarily involves reallocation of resources and sometimes redistribution of power).

g. Change (achievement by the "Outs" of at least some of their goals, usually involving structural changes and a more democratic distribution of power).

This model has been useful in analyzing community and institutional disputes in a variety of settings. It is crucial for any intervener to have some understanding of the location of the situation in the cycle if he or she is to be effective. The first stage (challenge) corresponds to the pre stage in the first typology. Conflict, crisis, and confrontation are three different levels of activity in the during phase. Communication and compromise are bridge stages, and the final stage (change) encompasses the after activities of the conflict intervenor.

The conflict cycle

In Managing Conflict in Community Groups, Robinson and Clifford describe "the conflict cycle" as having five stages or levels [6].

a. Tension development (parties polarize around issues, and persons involved begin to take sides).

b. Role Dilemma (concern grows in affected parties about their roles and what is expected of them; many persons experience severe role conflict).

c. Injustice collecting (parties collect and publicize alleged injustices caused by opponents).

d. Confrontation (incompatible values, goals, or policies which cannot be compromised lead to a direct confrontation which often requires dramatic new behaviors and(or) outside intervention to resolve).

e. Adjustment (compromises and redefinitions of territory occur through direct negotiation or other processes; values, goals, and policies are redefined).

The model uses a quite different approach than Laue's 7 C's, but the concepts of flow and some kind of negotiated compromise or settlement are crucial to both. In both models, the cycle may never reach the final stage if the dominant parties have the power and the will to resolve the issues unilaterally. Some "willingness to bargain" (often a result of a changed perception of the power realities of the situation) is required on the part of the powerful.

There are many other ways of viewing social conflict in the sociological literature, notably the work of James Coleman [1], Lewis Coser [2], Louis Kriesberg [3], Raymond Mack and R. C. Snyder [6], Robin Williams [9], and others. They all have in common the understanding that conflict is highly patterned. Effective community conflict intervention is not possible without this understanding as a starting point for analysis.

Intervention in Community Conflicts: An Analysis of Roles

Intervention in a community conflict situation is the deliberate and systematic entering-in to the situation by an outside or semi-outside party or parties (persons or organizations) with the aim of influencing the direction of the outcome of the conflict in a way deemed desirable by the intervener. All intervention alters the power configuration of the situation; therefore, all intervention is advocacy.

All intervention begins with a goal--or at least a conception of the nature, causes, and desirable directions of social conflict. By merely entering a conflict situation, an intervenor expresses a position. The strategies one pursues in conflict intervention largely are a result of the position the intervenor takes vis-à-vis the parties, the issues, and the values involved in the conflict. Neutrality is impossible, whether or not the intervenor feels neutral.

Against this conception of intervention as always value-related and goal-directed (which is explored in more depth in the chapter on "Value-Free, Objective Educators?" elsewhere in this publication), we examine the types of roles intervenors typically play in community conflict situations. My work, in conjunction with Gerald Cormick and Alana Cohen Knaster,[3] has identified five roles for community conflict intervention: Activist, Advocate, Mediator, Researcher, and Enforcer. They are differentiated in terms of three variables:

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[3]This typology was prepared for Laue and Cormick [5].

1. The intervenor's organizational and fiscal base;
2. The intervenor's relationship to the parties--his degree of identification with one party and range of empathy for, and access to the other parties; and
3. The skills the intervenor brings to bear on a conflict situation.

These five intervention roles are represented spatially in Figure 1, which builds the role types on concentric circles around each of the disputing parties, beginning with the Activist. Although many--if not most--community disputes involve more than two parties, it usually is possible to array the parties along an In/Out continuum in terms of control over the decisions about the resources at stake. So, while this chart represents only two hypothetical parties, it can be useful in analyzing any particular intervention activity.

1. Activist. An Activist most freqently works with the powerless or nonestablishment party in a conflict. A variant of the role, the Reactivist, may appear in a dispute aligned with the In party. Both the Activist and Reactivist may either become members of the group or be so closely aligned with it that they become directly involved and take the group's goals fully as their own. They have little or no ability to empathize with any party other than the one with which they are identified; in fact, the Out Activist role is drawn to indicate that the Activist on occasion may fully merge his or her identity with the Out party. Activists' skills usually include organizing, public speaking, planning strategy, and the ability to rally a following.

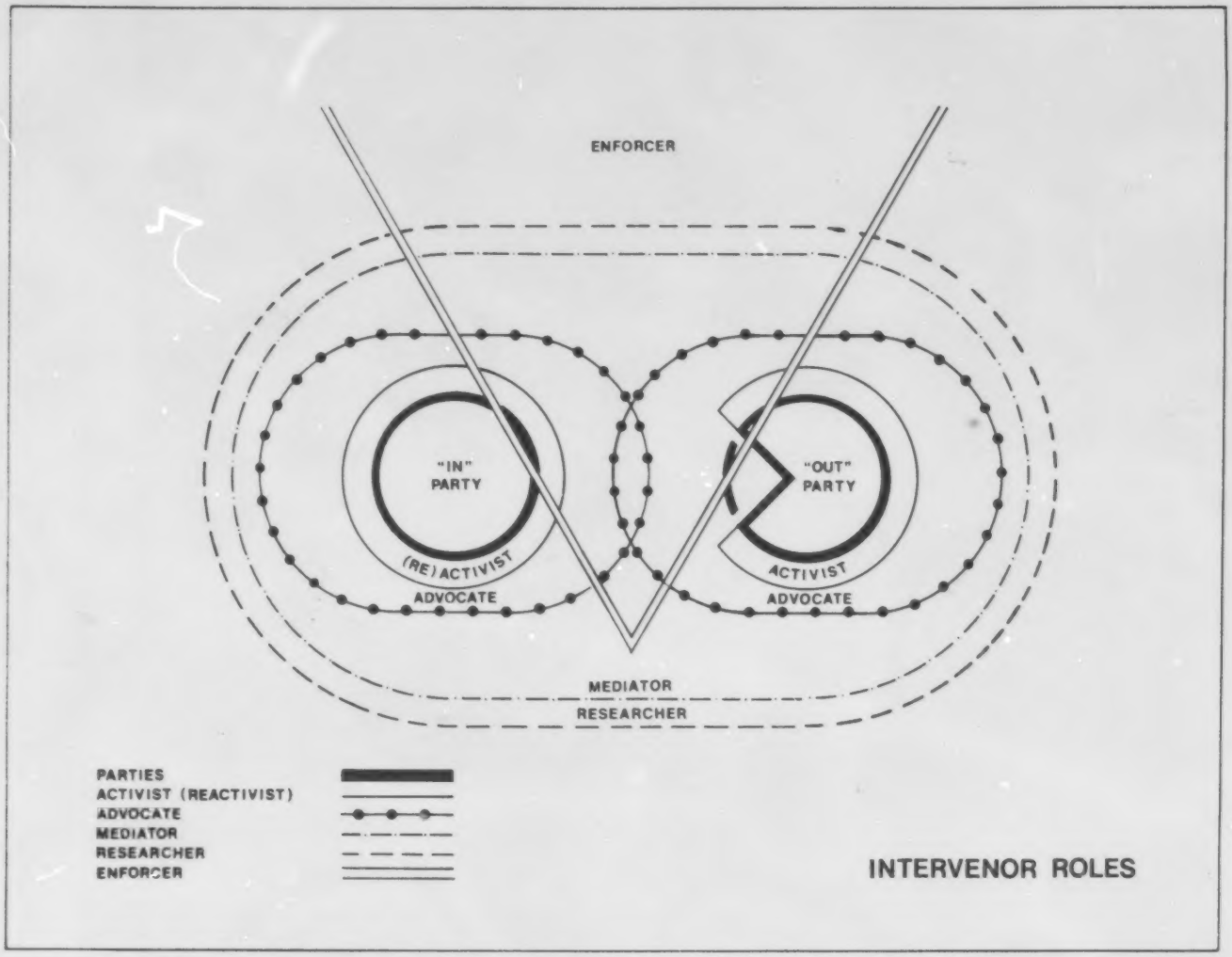

ENFORCER
"IN" PARTY
(RE) ACTIVIST
ADVOCATE
"OUT" PARTY
ACTIVIST
ADVOCATE
MEDIATOR
RESEARCHER
PARTIES
ACTIVIST (REACTIVIST)
ADVOCATE
MEDIATOR
RESEARCHER
ENFORCER
INTERVENOR ROLES

Figure 1.

2. Advocate. An Advocate is not a member of a disputing group but serves as an advisor or consultant to that group. An Advocate supports the goals of the group and promotes its cause to the opponents and to the wider community; he is able to extend his boundaries beyond the focused, committed Activist. The typical In Advocate is the management consultant, while the community organizer is the most frequent type of Out Advocate. A negotiator representing any of the parties also exemplifies this role type. Requisite skills include those of the Activist in addition to the ability to envision and achieve conflict termination and arrange contingencies so termination can take place on what the Advocate's party defines as good terms. The slight overlap of role-lines between In and Out Advocates designates the area where negotiations may begin as the Advocate(s) reach out to the other side(s). Sources of support for the Advocate's work may include any of the parties, as well as foundations, religious bodies, public agencies (Legal Aid, for example), etc.

3. Mediator. A Mediator has his base in none of the disputing parties and has a more general, less party-parochial view of the conflict. (The dot-and-dash line representing this role on the accompanying chart encompasses both of the parties, rather than being centered on one of them, as is the case with the Activist and Advocate role.) The Mediator is acceptable at some level of confidence to all of the disputing parties. He or she assists the parties in reaching a mutually satisfactory settlement of their differences, usually by means of face-to-face bargaining sessions between the parties. A fiscal and organizational base acceptable to the disputing parties (and ideally, in most situations, independent of

them) is crucial. Mediation skills are too numerous and too well-known to catalog here, but a brief analysis of the nature and problems of this role in community disputes follows this section.

4. Researcher. The Researcher may be a social scientist, a policy analyst, a media representative, or (as is increasingly the case in confrontations arising from a planned event such as a demonstration or political convention) a trained lay observer, who provides an independent evaluation of a given conflict situation. The Researcher perceives the conflict in its broadest context and is able to empathize with all positions. The impact of his intervention is determined by the interpretation and importance accorded his findings by the parties and by the wider public. It is difficult, however, for the Researcher to stay uninvolved; a Researcher may find himself subpoenaed by the Ins to testify about alleged law violations by Outs or used by battle-wise Outs to analyze the power structure of the Ins in preparation for conflict.

5. Enforcer. The Enforcer represents power to enforce conditions on conflicting parties irrespective of their wishes. The role often takes the institutional form of a formal agency of social control in the larger system within which the conflict is set--the police or the courts--or perhaps a funding agency or an arbitrator. The role is illustrated as a double line intersecting the other four roles to indicate that the Enforcer brings formal coercive power to the situation; no other intervenor does. The Enforcer brings the right to specify behavior which may support the goals of any or all of the parties or provide a baseline of legality and, flowing from it, a sense of the superordinate power realities to

which disputing parties must respond. One rarely sees a true arbitrator in community disputes because the web of issues and parties usually is so complex that no single person or agency has an appropriate base to command allegiance to an imposed solution--and no statutory process for submitting such disputes to arbitration currently exists.

Each of these intervenor roles appears in every community conflict situation. Usually, any individual intervenor or intervention organization can play only one role in any dispute; in fact, once an intervenor is "typed" in a particular role in one dispute he may be unable to play a different role in another dispute. We have observed skillful intervenors playing two or more roles in the same dispute, however. The Advocate Mediator is the best example, combining mediation skills with the work necessary to organize and strengthen the weaker party so a settlement that will stick can be achieved. The key to this kind of role-mixing is the perceived integrity and judiciousness of the intervenor.

There are a number of widespread misconceptions and problems regarding roles for third-party intervention in community disputes, among them a) the indiscriminate labeling of all intervenors as "mediators," b) the notion that Mediators in community disputes are or ought to be neutral (as the concept has developed in labor-management relations), and c) the failure of many intervenors to be aware either of the fact of their intervention (Activists and Researchers are the most typical examples) or of the implications of their particular skills, biases, and power base on the parties and the dynamics of the dispute.

The nature and problems of the mediator role

The role most often associated with intervention in community disputes is that of the Mediator. Many who in fact are performing other intervention roles tend to call themselves "mediators."

The experienced Mediator performs a number of different functions in community disputes and crises, each designed to further the negotiations and the resolution process. The Mediator is an aid to the negotiations; he does not replace the joint decision-making process.

The Mediator does not serve as a neutral third party when he enters a dispute. Merely by advocating the negotiation or joint decision-making process as a way of dealing with a conflict, the Mediator is advocating, in my view, positive change rather than repression. His decision on when or whether to intervene is an important factor affecting the outcome of a dispute. So is the way he reports one party's issue-saliency to another.

The negotiation process, itself, determines the extent to which a Mediator can favor one party over another. Obviously, the parties would not accept his assistance if he had a reputation for unfairness. Moreover, if a party felt that a Mediator were acting unfairly during negotiations, it could require him to withdraw from the negotiations.

As a tool for achieving change, mediation has both advantages and disadvantages. Negotiation converts power and potential power into a settlement that approximates the relative strength of the parties. Community groups choose to negotiate when they wish to solidfy the gains they have made so far or when they want to buy some time to reorganize, develop new strategies, or further develop their power base. A Mediator will assist change only if he understands and respects these prerogatives.

Mediation and the negotiation process are often the quickest routes to gaining concessions from the opposition because established institutions are coming to recognize and accept these processes. Indigenous leaders who develop good negotiation skills, understand the mediation process, and know how to "use" Mediators can help achieve the goals of their organizations.

Mediation may also be the best route to achieving legitimation with the established institutions and a way of setting up direct communication in an otherwise noncommunicative or chaotic situation. In this context, a Mediator often helps grass roots or citizen groups (a) gain recognition, (b) overcome internal problems of representation and leadership, (c) establish new contacts, (d) cut through red tape, (e) locate new resources, or (f) use the resources they already have to the best advantage.

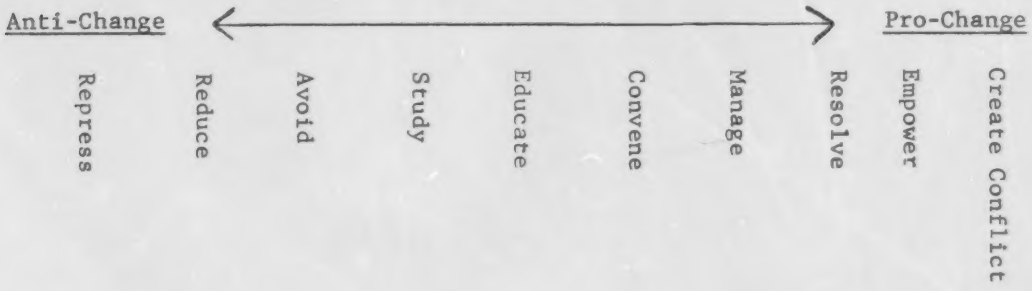
But it must be emphasized that mediation is not suited to all conflicts and disputes. Disputing parties always need to carefully weigh all of the pros and cons before pursuing this course of action.

Strategies for Community Conflict Intervention

A strategy is a detailed plan for achieving an objective. If one views community conflicts--and conflict intervention--within the framework presented in this paper, it is clear that any intervenor has a range of objectives he or she might choose to pursue. One's strategy for intervention is determined primarily by the goals chosen for intervention. Once the potential intervenor has examined his base and skills and has established his goals for intervention, an appropriate role (Mediator, Advocate, etc.) and strategy may be selected.

Selecting a strategy rarely follows this kind of formal or rational process, of course. Third-party individuals and organizations often are thrust into a conflict situation without the opportunity to determine whether they want to be there, without a systematic examination of their goals for the outcome of the conflict, and without careful consideration of intervention strategies. But it is important for intervenors to make their pre-entry analysis as comprehensive and explicit as possible, and the following listing of strategic options is intended to aid in that process.

Strategies for intervention may be arrayed on a roughly continuous dimension based on the intervenor's orientation to change--i.e., is he or she interested in promoting basic social change (redistribution of power and resources) or maintaining the status quo (or even status quo ante)? I have identified 10 types of strategies that an intervenor may employ in a conflict or potential conflict situation, ranging from repression (the most anti-change or establishment-supporting option) to creating conflict (the strongest pro-change option).



1. Repress. Intervenors who are in strong sympathy with the position and goals of the establishment or most powerful institutions in a community dispute--and are willing to use potentially extreme means to protect the interests of those groups--may select repression as a strategy. Repressing conflict usually involves repressing the Out groups (often through the physical force of law enforcement agencies) and blocking them from attaining their goals. The extreme form is imprisoning or killing Out group opponents; more moderate forms may include cooptation, isolation, denying resources, or utilizing the law to bankrupt or imprison opposition leadership.

2. Reduce. Although on the surface the reduction of conflict seems to be a worthy goal in community dispute situations, tension-reduction per se as a goal or strategy almost always supports the status quo or establishment party because it undercuts what often is the only source of leverage for change available to Out groups. Conflict reduction involves forcing or convincing the less powerful parties to stop their protest activities and "sit down and talk about this reasonably." Although this is a laudable objective, if this is the only concern of the intervenor, it will lower the level of conflict without dealing with the underlying issues of power and resources.

3. Avoid. A common strategy of many establishment parties--and potential intervenors--is to avoid taking any stance or action vis-a-vis a conflict in the anticipation that the conflict will run its course without the necessity of involvement. Pursuing an avoidance or noninvolvement

strategy requires the potential intervenor to overlook the alleged injustices or other problems that have led to the surfacing of the conflict.

4. Study. A typical response of academically-trained persons interested in conflict is to conduct research on the situation, often resulting in a written analysis and(or) recommendations to the parties involved or outside agencies. There is little evidence that such studies influence the direction of conflict situations. But the Researcher role as described earlier in this paper is a potentially influential position in a conflict and often benefits the more powerful parties because of their ability to purchase, understand, and apply the findings of studies.

5. Educate. If analysis determines that a lack of information or skills on the part of one or more of the parties in conflict is either a cause of the conflict or a block to its constructive termination, intervenors may select a strategy which is essentially educational. Often the assumption here is that knowledge and skills are better than ignorance and incompetence, and intervenors adopting an educational strategy may be unaware that their educational activities usually help to empower one party (customarily the party with the most power already) more than the others. Assistance to the parties in clarifying their positions and understanding their relative strength in the conflict is one extremely important form of educational assistance.

6. Convene. Potential intervenors with a high level of credibility with all the parties to a conflict are well-suited to pursue a strategy as convenor of the parties for negotiations--or for informal discussions which may lead to a negotiated settlement of their differences. The

convening strategy is the first step on this continuum toward advocacy for the Out parties because the high-prestige convenor confers legitimacy on the weaker or protesting party by bringing its representatives to the table with establishment groups.

7. Manage. A strategy that aims to manage or regulate conflict is both more active and potentially more on the pro-change end of the continuum because it assumes that conflict is "natural" but that escalation of conflict to violence will harm the weaker parties more than the stronger parties. The aim is to assist parties in developing self-regulating mechanisms that will keep conflict within productive boundaries and lead to outcomes that are perceived as fair by all parties.

8. Resolve. Properly interpreted and applied, resolution is a strategy and a process that can produce lasting changes (i.e., redistribution of power and resources). This approach recognizes that conflicts are always latent in the social system, that the relationships between groups are never fully "solved," and that, literally, they are re-solved continuosly as new issues arise and escalate. For a conflict episode to be fully "resolved," the underlying issues (often dealing with structural inequities or injustice) must be brought to the surface and addressed; they cannot be repressed, studied away, or managed without attention to these deeper problems. Resolution implies that the conflict has been transformed and satisfactory accommodation reached on the underlying issues. Resolution is achieved only when the parties themselves--not the intervenor--define the situation as resolved.

9. Empower. This paper has argued that community conflicts always involve power disparities between the parties. If the power configuration stays the same, then the establishment party or parties will unilaterally exercise that power and attempt to enforce an outcome on the situation. If jointly-determined, win/win outcomes of conflict are to occur, the existing power disparities between the parties must be bridged to some extent.[4] Thus, empowerment strategies are required if constructive change is to take place. All the parties in a conflict must be negotiating from a position of some operational power. Charity is no basis for justice; only if all the parties have the power to advocate for their own needs and interests can conflict be terminated in just, jointly-determined, and lasting ways.

10. Create Conflict. The potential intervenor who sees deep injustices and inequities that are not being dealt with may wish to select agitation as his primary strategy, knowing that the quickest way to get issues on the policy agenda is to create conflict that disrupts the normal activities and schedules of institutions and their leaders, and gets considerable public attention. This is the most change-oriented of all the strategic approaches because it is not aimed at cooling, managing, resolving or otherwise "coping" with conflict--but rather views conflict as a positive force and attempts to increase the amount and level of conflict in service of a redistribution of power and reallocation of the resources in question.

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[4] These values regarding the appropriate outcomes of community conflicts are explored in depth in the paper on "Value-Free, Objective Educators?" elsewhere in this publication.

It should be reiterated that one or more of these strategies are employed by all intervenors in social conflict situations, regardless of whether they are aware of what they are doing. The purpose of spelling them out in detail here is to encourage intervenors and potential intervenors to carefully consider their options for involvement and the implications of these options for the parties in conflict.

Skills of the Community Conflict Intervenor

I have presented an analysis of the nature of community conflicts, roles that conflict intervenors may assume, and the strategies they may pursue. Now we turn to a brief listing of the skills which any conflict intervenor--regardless of his or her values, role, or strategic approach--needs to master to be effective. Most intervenors will be utilizing the following skills at some time during their work in a specific conflict situation. The skills themselves are not tied to any particular role-type or strategy.

Eleven different types of skills are listed and briefly defined with the expectation that this presentation will be of use to intervenors in clarifying and analyzing their own intervention behavior. The skills are listed in the general order that they tend to be applied (and in some cases need to be applied) in conflict situations.

1. Self-Analysis. One of the most critical skills for any successful intervenor is the ability to assess one's own base, skills, potentials, and limitations vis-à-vis any given community dispute. Unless the potential intervenor can clearly see himself or herself as an actor with certain

characteristics and power within a transient social network, it is impossible to keep the intervention in appropriate perspective.

As a result of my years of intervening and studying intervention, I have come to believe that good intervenors possess certain personality characteristics (traits?) and that good self-analysis should reveal whether these characteristics are present. They include:

a. Flexibility (the ability to keep options open, delay closure, shift roles and skills quickly, not get rigidly committed to any one process or solution).

b. Delay or Denial of Gratification (the successful intervenor must be able and willing to let the parties take credit for any solutions achieved and to inhibit any tendency to "give the right answer" just because he or she perceives it at any given moment in the conflict scenario).[5]

c. Contingency Thinking ("if/thenning," since most variables in a community conflict situation are not subject to the control of an intervenor).

d. Ability to Avoid Counter-Dependence (once helping relationships have been established, professionals often have a difficult time withdrawing; knowing when not to intervene and when to get out are crucial abilities).

2. Community Analysis. No intervention can be planned intelligently until the intervening person or agency has a comprehensive picture of the

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[5] Robert Theobold's [8] admonition to change agents is especially appropriate for conflict intervenors: "You can either do social change or take credit for social change--you cannot do both."

nature of the social system in which the conflict is set: history, issues, parties, etc. The Case Study Outline developed by the Community Conflict Resolution Program is included at the end of this paper as a guide to asking the types of questions for which answers are needed before intervention can be effective.

3. Communication Skills. The ability to think, speak, and write clearly is essential. Control of emotions and their effect also is essential. Not only are skills of personal presentation required, but skills for facilitating communication among disputing parties (or factions within parties) and in communicating with the media also are critical.

4. Organizing. Personal organization and the ability to organize small and large groups of persons must be part of a successful intervenor's skills. "Community organizing" skills are especially important for intervenors working to empower Out groups.

5. Negotiating. Intervenors are often called upon to find negotiated settlements of procedural as well as substantive issues during the course of conflicts. Effective negotiation requires the ability to effectively advocate for a position when one does not have all the power necessary to achieve that position. Bargaining, perception of trade-offs, willingness and ability to see compromises and packages--all are part of the techniques required.

6. Mediating. Assisting the process between parties or issues (as contrasted to "in behalf of," as is the case in negotiating) is required at many points in conflict scenaria if mutually acceptable accommodations are to be reached. Techniques and limitations of mediation--the most

common of intervention roles--were discussed earlier in this paper in connection with the analysis of the intervention role typology. Some of the more important of the many techniques which must be mastered are creating forums for bargaining, arranging meetings, interpreting, carrying messages, judging confidentiality, and face-saving.

7. Providing Information. The ability to provide information to disputing parties is a combination of relevant knowledge, communication skills, and good timing. It is an important source of power for the intervenor and an important type of empowerment for the parties. This skill may be one of the most critical for the intervenor who wishes to pursue an educational strategy. Often the key is a well-organized topical library on the areas in dispute which can be used on very short notice when the parties need certain types of information.

8. Identifying Resources. In many conflict situations, a third party is in a much better position than any of the disputing parties to identify and solicit outside resources which may aid in successfully resolving the conflict. This ability is critically important because most community conflicts concern the allocation of scarce resources--and the typical solution is the provision of more resources from as neutral and(or) credible a source as possible. The key here is the long and painstaking task of building up a network of contacts and interpersonal capital which can be utilized on very short notice at the appropriate time in conflicts.

9. Brokering. As with negotiation, brokering is a form of advocacy--in this case, advocacy for the credibility of a particular party or parties in a dispute. Brokering involves putting different entities together

under the aura of credibility that the broker enjoys among all of them. The entities may be opposing parties, or they may be needs and resources.

10. Counseling. Decision-makers in conflict and crisis situations often need quiet good counsel regarding the dilemmas and decisions they face. The skilled and respected intervenor can play this sounding board role with almost any of the parties in a given conflict depending on his or her level of judiciousness as perceived by the parties, regardless of formal intervention base.

11. Implementing Solutions. In those conflicts in which the highly desirable goal of reaching a negotiated agreement is attained, intervenors often are asked to help shape the details of a solution and assist in implementation. A variety of skills can be helpful; generally no one intervenor possesses all of them. Among them are program development, planning, evaluation, and training.

Summary: Power, Analysis, Base, and Judiciousness

Effective and just community conflict intervention requires a combination of a) a firm understanding of the centrality of power in the dynamics of conflict, b) a high level of skills in both self analysis and community analysis, c) a clear perception of one's base and its potentials and limitations regarding intervention, and d) judiciousness on the part of the intervenor in his or her dealings with people and information.

The strategic sensitivities and technical skills outlined in this paper are best acquired by highly disciplined persons who understand these points, who have the position and the experience to take risks in working

for social justice in conflict situations, and who are willing to learn predominantly in the field rather than in the conference room. I believe that Extension staff -- because of their base, training, and community experiences -- are in a unique position to pursue the important task of dealing constructively with social conflicts.

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CASE STUDY OUTLINE

This outline for researching and writing-up case studies in community crisis intervention also can serve as a guide for collecting and noting information relevant to the researcher, enforcement agency, mediator, advocate, or activist organizer.

A. The Setting:

1. Location (i.e., general area, urban-rural, etc.)
2. Background information including:
   a) past relationships between the various parties involved.
   b) description of the surrounding community and its power structure, history, attitudes, etc.
3. Concurrent events outside the immediate dispute and community which had an impact on the situation.

B. Chronological Outline of the Dispute:

This should include all relevant dates gleaned from materials available including the start of the conflict, significant changes in the conflict, and the conclusion (date of settlement, stand-off or, if no termination, the date of the report).

C. Parties to the Dispute:

The parties include both groups and important individuals.

1. As a first step the parties should be divided into three categories:
   a) established institution and its allies
   b) community or challenging groups and their allies
   c) parties not involved in the immediate dispute or allied to either "side," but with a primary interest in an accommodation of the differences.
2. Within each of the above categories, the individual parties should be identified as to their "role" in the conflict.
   a) immediate party to the dispute
   b) activist or reactivist
   c) community advocate or professional advocate (management consultant)
   d) mediator
   e) evaluator or researcher

3. Characteristics of organizations and groups
   a) membership - size
   b) structure or style of leadership and description of leaders
   c) financial and(or) other "legitimacy" base
   d) history
   e) racial/ethnic characteristics
   f) relationship to established institution(s) (if community group--i.e., client, employee, tenant, etc.)

4. The type of sanction or power available and used or threatened. (i.e., strike, sit-in, violence, litigation, publicity, etc.)

5. Role and relationship of each party in any coalitions or alliances of which it is a part.

6. Types of changes in the factors above (3, 4 and 5) which occurred during the period of conflict from its beginning to its termination (or the present).

7. Identify the "cleavages" between the key parties--(i.e., race, sec, age, class, etc.). What is the central cleavage? How does it affect the dispute?

D. The Issues:

1. Begin by listing each of the issues which were in evidence at the time the dispute emerged as an overt conflict in terms of:
   a) its basis and(or) what it "means" (i.e., "control" vs. "resources")
   b) its relevance to total dispute
   c) its relative importance or priority to each party
   d) the position of the various parties regarding the issue.
2. Issues which emerged and were added during the conflict. Note why these additional issues emerged (i.e., amnesty because of arrests during dispute, other issues as a result of new alliances or to attract new allies, etc.), describe in terms of the factors listed under 1., above.
3. Development of and changes in the issues through interplay of demands and responses during the dispute.
4. The issues listed in the settlement, if any, and the basis for the settlement.

E. The Role of the Intervenors:

Note: Each identifiable intervenor group (mediator, advocate, activist, etc.) should be assessed in terms of these variables.

1. The way in which the intervenor entered the dispute.
2. Problems (if any) encountered in gaining acceptance from the parties.
3. Some assessment of:
   a) the attitudes of the various parites toward the intervenor, and how those attitudes changed, if, in fact, they did, during the dispute.
   b) the impact of such intervention on the dispute, including how it affected:
      i) relative power of parties
      ii) resources available
      iii) degree of overt conflict activity
      iv) timing and duration of the conflict
      v) publicity
      vi) etc.
4. Role(s) played by the intervenor in the following areas:
   a) actions oriented toward one party such as consultation--advice, providing information, contacts and allies.
   b) actions oriented toward the relations between the parties
      i) legitimize
      ii) resources expanded
      iii) communication
      iv) facilitator
      v) advocate
      vi) enforcer
      vii) face-saving

   and any other identifiable roles you observe to be important.

F. The Accommodation (if any) and Expected or Realized Outcomes:

1. Presentation, description and explanation of the agreement.
2. Some discussion of why this specific agreement emerged.
3. Some assessment of "win" vs. "loss" in terms of both your own perceptions and assessment and that of the parties.
4. The feasibility of the agreement in terms of the relative power of the parties, resources available, and acceptability to constituents.
5. Changes achieved in relation to:
   a) goals of parties
   b) goals of intervenor

6. Types of changes which are realized, expected or likely to occur.
   a) policy changes or changes in decision-making process
   b) redistribution of resources
   c) establishment of ongoing mechanism(s)
   d) internal organizational or community change
   e) tension-reduction
   f) politicization of parties
   g) recognition-legitimization
   h) other

---James Laue and Gerald Cormick

COPING WITH CONFLICT AMONG ORGANIZATIONS:

OPTIONS AND STRATEGIES

by

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COPING WITH CONFLICT AMONG ORGANIZATIONS

University Extension frequently has to cooperate with others to accomplish its goals, e.g. education for better nutrition, leadership development for youth, promoting community development, and facilitating decisions about agricultural production. Cooperation does not always go smoothly and conflict may develop. Conflict may develop because of differences of opinion about which organizations should be included in cooperative efforts and over the allocation of resources. Conflict also can occur if there are difficulties about who is to "get the credit" for successful programs. It is apparent that extension personnel must be aware of the causes and consequences of conflict between organizations and agencies and our goal here is to work toward that end. First, we will review some of the research and applied biases that have caused many to emphasize cooperation and to ignore conflict. Causes of cooperation and conflict between organizations will be discussed. Alternative strategies available to help prevent some of the negative consequences of conflict will be presented.

Although voluntary organizations and associations have been increasingly viewed as semi-open relative to their environment, researchers and practitioners alike are still critized for being too concerned about cooperation and coordination while conflict has almost pointedly been ignored. Klonglan and colleagues state that the idea that cooperation is necessarily good and conflict bad is a value almost never stated explicitly [Klonglan et al., 1973]. Negandhi (1975) points out that

most scholars recognize that the assumption of no conflict is unrealistic but that a "hang-up with intraorganizational theory and consensus influences people to emphasize cooperation over conflict and to seek to reduce conflict."

Mulford and Mulford's (1977) review of existing criticisms of work in interorganizational relations (IOR) indicates that the bias toward cooperation exists because: a) of political and moral overtones, b) most of the research has been done in the area of human services with a focus on better delivery systems, and c) methodological difficulties in doing work on both cooperation and conflict. In addition, it is pointed out that with a few exceptions (Halpert, 1974; Warren, 1974; Benson, 1975; Paulson, 1976) studies of dyads or larger networks have seldom been made. Most so-called studies of IOR are actually only studies of single organizations.

Mulford and Mulford (1977) state that IOR work which focuses narrowly on cooperation has ignored a rich tradition in community sociology that includes a concern for both conflict and cooperation. A review of selected community literature indicates that it has long been noted that: a) conflict and cooperation may exist simultaneously between organizations, b) conflict is not less natural and good than cooperation, and c) propositions about conflict and cooperation have existed for a considerable period of time in community textbooks.

The conclusions practitioners and persons with applied interests can draw from these criticisms of IOR are that it is very unrealistic to view the IOR field in terms of cooperation only, and that a large number of persons are available who would seriously question attempts to

work with or help organize local organizations and agencies solely on the basis of cooperation of consensus. In addition, it is apparent that conflict not only is "usually out there" if one looks hard enough for it but also that conflict between organizations may be functional (See Figure 1) in that conflict may cause alternative causes of action to be considered.

The new and expanding view of relationships between organizations and agencies requires that practitioners become familiar with the causes and consequences of both conflict and cooperation. In addition, to the degree that practitioners continue to be involved with organizations and agencies that cooperate and have conflict (as a facilitator, coordinator, or resource person) it may be useful to think about this involvement in terms of role analysis. Although conflict and cooperation takes place between organizations, role analysis is useful because the practitioners most likely will be in direct contact with "boundary persons" who represent and negotiate for the various organizations [Thompson, 1962:309-310]. In this sense, IOR can be seen in terms of interaction between "boundary spanners." The actual boundary spanning can take several forms but always involves individuals who represent these organizations in their interaction with other organizations (See Figure 2).

Conflict and Cooperation Between Organizations

Several perspectives exist that shed some light on the causes of cooperation and conflict. Like most social phenomena each perspective may be partially true -- depending on the situation and forces present. Warren (1974) defines "cooperation" as interaction in which the two organizations seek different issue outcomes (See Figure 3). Levine and White do not

discuss cooperation per se but focus on "exchange" which they define as any voluntary activity between two organizations that has consequences for the realization of their respective goals. Schermerhorn (1975) has assessed the various terms used to describe cooperation and points out that the key underlying denominators are deliberate relations between otherwise autonomous organizations for the joint accomplishment of individual operating goals.

Dahrendorf (1958, 1959), Bernard (1957, 1965), and Stern, (1973) state that conflict as a concept is broad enough to include competition, contests, disputed tensions, and incompatible differences and objectives. Braito and colleagues remind us that exchange between organizations is contingent upon prior "domain consensus," e.g. the degree to which each organization accepts each other's claims with regard to domain (1972:176-179). Domain consensus, then, may be both sought by an organization and granted by others. Finally, Levine and White (1963) state that conflict can occur when organizations seek to expand their domains or when it is judged that the organization is not doing as much as it should.

Based on his analysis of his decision-making, White (1973) defines cooperation as a relational state in which the resources to A and B come from a common pool, or from a pool controlled individually by A and B, and is based on mutual agreement on decision-making rules. Cooperation includes an implicit agreement on rules of reciprocity and permits trade-offs. Competition is a relational state in which the allocation of resources is on the basis of A and B observing allocative criteria set by a third party, C, on third parties, C's. Conflict occurs when resources

are jointly allocated to A and B in the absence of agreement either on decision-making rules or on allocative criteria.

Causes of Conflict and Cooperation

One point that should be kept in mind is that conflict and cooperation may not be polar opposites, e.g. an absence of cooperation does not mean that conflict is necessarily present. An absence of factors making for (causing) cooperation does not mean that conflict will result. Perhaps no relations are present between the organizations. At any point in time, for any dyad of organizations, the two organizations may be cooperating in one sphere or activity and in conflict in another sphere.

Let us turn first in our discussion to factors that make for cooperation, then look at conflict. Zimmerman (1973) has completed a study of why service agreements are or are not signed between services in local government. Top-ranking reasons for agreements include: a) a lack of facilities, b) to meet urgent problems, c) being able to practice an economy of scale in equipment and supply purchases, d) lack of qualified personnel and e) because the citizens demand it. On the other hand, top-ranking reasons why agreements are not signed include: a) an adverse public reaction, meaning that the personnel think their service may be perceived as inadequate if they have to cooperate with others to get the job done, b) it is hard to terminate a bad relationship once it's started, c) the agreement tends to limit an organization's autonomy, and d) fear that the costs of the agreement will not be equitable. The main reason for agreements was economy of scale and the reason against them was loss of autonomy. Paulson (1974, 1976) in a study of health related agencies and organizations,

has found that competition is caused by goal similarity and by similarity in available resources. Cooperation was caused by goal similarity, resource level differences, having administrators with the same social status, organizational complexity, relatively high rates of interval communication, decentralized decision-making, efficiency, innovativeness and by domain consensus. In addition, Paulson found that lack of status differences caused domain consensus to increase. Competition was not significantly related to cooperation in this study. Mulford and Mulford (1977) have found in a study of voluntary organizations that both cooperation and competition are likely to occur when organizations recruit members from the same age categories, sponsor the same number of activities for the community, and are of the same relative size. In addition, the Mulfords found that relatively many dyads were based upon both conflict and cooperation. Bates (1972, 1974) has concluded that the division of labor at community level can cause cooperation to occur, but if organizations seek to use the division of labor to their advantage, conflict can result.

Levine and White (1961) stress that exchange is more likely to occur when: a) domain consensus exists, b) alternative resources are not available elsewhere, and c) when the functions and objectives of the respective organizations are comparable. Braito and her colleagues (1972) have found that domain consensus is related to: a) being willing to commit the organization's resource to the problem area, b) sponsoring activities that are directly relevant for the problem area, c) having members of relevant professions on an organization's board, d) being a relatively older organization, and e) being a relatively more formally organized health organization or agency.

Schermerhorn (1975) has surveyed much of the literature in IOR and has developed propositions about factors thought to produce cooperation. Organizations will seek out or be receptive to cooperation when: a) faced with resource scarcity or performance distress, b) cooperation per se takes on a positive value, c) a powerful extra-organizational force demands the cooperation, d) loss of decision-making autonomy is not too great, e) unfavorable ramifications for image and identity are not too great, f) costs relative to available resources are not too great, g) the organizations' boundaries are permeable, e.g., boundary spanners are available, h) domain consensus exists, i) prevailing norms of the organizations support cooperative activity, and j) when physical opportunity for cooperation exists. We have summarized the results of the various studies and theories cited and this is presented in Figures 4 and 5.

It is relatively easy for researchers and practitioners to be pessimistic with regard to these results. Obviously, we know much more about cooperation than we do about the causes of conflict. Of the various causes of cooperation or conflict, relatively few of the factors are "dynamic" e.g. it would be relatively difficult to manipulate these factors directly. For example, almost nothing can be done about comparable size, physical opportunities for cooperation, or about characteristics of the respective organizations such as organizational complexity.

Practitioners have two choices with regard to strategies: they can choose to emphasize factors that make cooperation more likely, or they can choose to emphasize cooperation but also be prepared to understand and deal creatively with conflict between organizations. Olson (1968) has hypothesized that it is possible for a system to be relatively high on both integration and conflict at the same time. That is, members are

confident in the system and wish to remain a part of it, but conflict that encourages an exploration of all possible alternatives is not discouraged. The integration makes the conflict possible without necessarily threatening the system, and the system profits from the creative functions of conflict. Applied to IOR, Olsen's ideas would mean that conflict between organizations will not always be bad and that during a cooperative effort involving several organizations, both cooperation and conflict may be present.

We take "coordination" to mean anything that is done to influence the interaction between organizations. Some ideas about how cooperation and conflict can be coordinated by practitioners are being developed and it is hoped that this discussion will stimulate more consideration of this problem.

Influencing Cooperation and Conflict Between Organizations

From the research and theory reviewed in this paper, and feedback received from training and consulting with practitioners, it has become apparent that several useful options exist to increase cooperation between organizations and to manage conflict. For the fully developed strategy to create interorganizational coordination, see the research report, instructor's guide, student's workbook and overview completed at Iowa State University (Klonglan, et al. 1975a, b,; Mulford, et al. 1975 a, b.).

An overview of the strategies is shown in Figure 6. Practitioners may be able to influence decisions made in organizations about: a) the organization's willingness to place a hypothetical problem relatively high on its priority list (problem commitment); b) willingness to participate in a joint, cooperative program (commitment to coordination), and c) may

also be able to promote domain consensus so that all relevant organizations are included if this is needed. Success in these three areas may make cooperation more likely and will decrease the chances of conflict. We think that if domain consensus is relatively high the network of organizations will be able to experience conflict without serious dysfunctions.

Influencing decisions in key organizations

For overcoming a lack of problem commitment, coordination commitment and for increasing domain consensus among organizations, three checklists for practitioners and three sets of activities to be completed have been developed.[1] The checklist for problem commitment (See Figure 7) specifies some useful ideas to be considered. In the application activity (See Figure 8) the practitioner is asked to assess whether or not key organizations are committed to the hypothetical problem and to specify exactly how dicision-makers are to be convinced if problem commitment is too low. After commitment to the problem has been obtained, it may still be necessary to convince decision-makers that coordination with other organizations is needed for success.

As for problem commitment, a checklist and set of activities to be completed to increase the likelihood of organizations being willing to work with other organizations have been developed (See Figures 9 and 10). The practitioner is asked to determine which organizations do not wish to work with others, the reasons if they do not, and the practitioner is asked to specify which of the available strategies is to be used to

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[1] These checklists and activities are from the applied module developed to teach about creating coordination. For a complete discussion see Klonglan, et al., 1975a, b; and Mulford, et al., 1975a, b.

convince the decision-makers in the "reluctant" organizations. For example, it can be point out that the feared loss of autonomy is only in a selected area for a limited time, or it can be pointed out that other organizations should be included because of their past relevant work in the problem areas.

Domain consensus has to do with convincing reluctant or hesitant organizations that each of the other key organizations should be included. Key organizations possess resources, have existing relevant programs, past experience, or are needed for legitimization. Again, a checklist to consider and a set of activities to be completed have been developed to increase domain consensus (See Figures 11 and 12). Increasing domain consensus may increase the likelihood of cooperation and decrease the likelihood of destructive conflict.

Influencing boundary spanners

Interpersonal techniques have been developed to increase self understanding and promote trust and positive feedback. Because interorganizational relations often involve interaction between boundary persons who represent their organizations, consideration has been given to ways that a practitioner can influence the interaction between boundary persons. First, the practitioner should remember (Figure 13) that conflict may lead to creative tension that will benefit the coordinated effort. With regard to his own role, the practitioner: a) may decide to do nothing when conflict occurs, b) may convince one organization to concede, or c) act as a neutral third party (Figures 14, 15, and 16). How the practitioner chooses to behave when conflict exists between organizations has significant implications especially when a coordinated effort to work on activities is

desired. Through preventive practices including training in conflict resolution and early decisions about how rewards will be distributed, the practitioner may be able to manage the conflict and make it useful (Figures 16 and 17). Finally, there are things that individual organizations can do to help reduce the conflict, such as modify their goals, or increase the information that they are providing about priorities and decisions reached by their organization (Figure 17 and 18).

In workshops and during consulting work these strategies have been positively evaluated by lay persons, practitioners and leaders in the public and private sectors. The techniques can be discussed directly, they can be discussed in relationship to specific situations brought to mind by those present, or they can be used effectively with fictitious case studies. In addition, the techniques can be used to help in planning. We hope that these ideas will stimulate others to continue thinking about the roles that conflict and cooperation play in social settings.

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FIGURE 1

EMERGING PERSPECTIVES ON COOPERATION AND CONFLICT AMONG ORGANIZATIONS

BIASES TOWARD COOPERATION:

- *POLITICAL AND MORAL OVERTONES
- *FUNDING AGENCIES' PREFERENCES
- *METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL DIFFICULTIES

THEORISTS AND RESEARCHERS TODAY:

- *BOTH COOPERATION AND CONFLICT ARE NATURAL AND LIKELY TO OCCUR
- *SEEK OUT PROPOSITIONS AND MODELS THAT INCLUDE BOTH COOPERATION AND CONFLICT

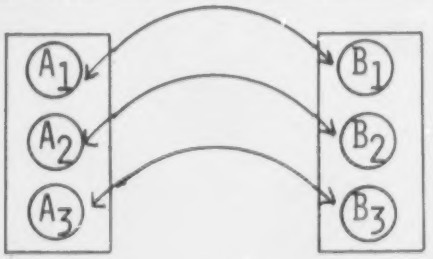
THEREFORE:

- *PRACTITIONERS NEED TO ACQUIRE NEW SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE
- *"CONFLICT RESOLUTION" MAY BE AN INCOMPLETE AND ONLY PARTIALLY USEFUL STRATEGY
- *STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT MUST BE BROAD AND INCLUSIVE OF ALL RELEVANT SOCIAL PROCESSES

FIGURE 2

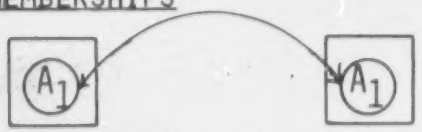
BOUNDARY SPANNERS AND IOR

I. BOUNDARY-SPANNING ROLES IN TWO ORGANIZATIONS



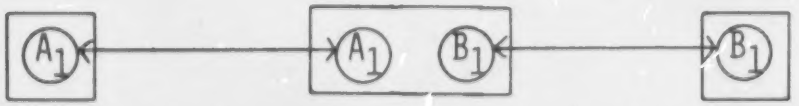
(ORGANIZATION A) (ORGANIZATION B)

II. MULTIPLE MEMBERSHIPS



(ORGANIZATION A) (ORGANIZATION B)

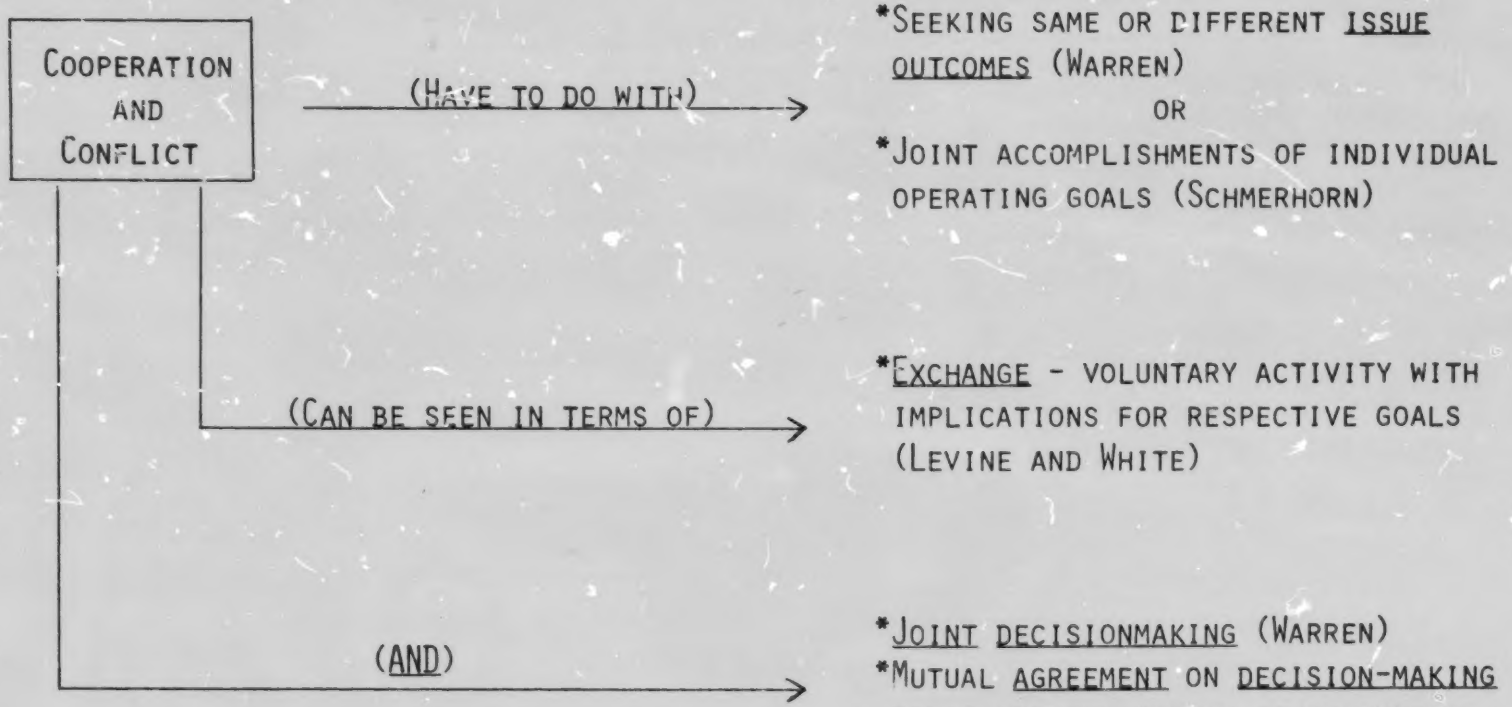
III. MEMBERSHIP IN A THIRD ORGANIZATION



(ORGANIZATION A) (ORGANIZATION B)

COOPERATION AND CONFLICT

FIGURE 3


COOPERATION AND CONFLICT
(HAVE TO DO WITH)
*SEEKING SAME OR DIFFERENT ISSUE OUTCOMES (WARREN)
OR
*JOINT ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF INDIVIDUAL OPERATING GOALS (SCHMERHORN)
(CAN BE SEEN IN TERMS OF)
*EXCHANGE - VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR RESPECTIVE GOALS (LEVINE AND WHITE)
(AND)
*JOINT DECISIONMAKING (WARREN)
*MUTUAL AGREEMENT ON DECISION-MAKING ROLES AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES
*RESOURCES ALLOCATED IN ABSENCE OF RULES (WHITE)

109

FIGURE 4

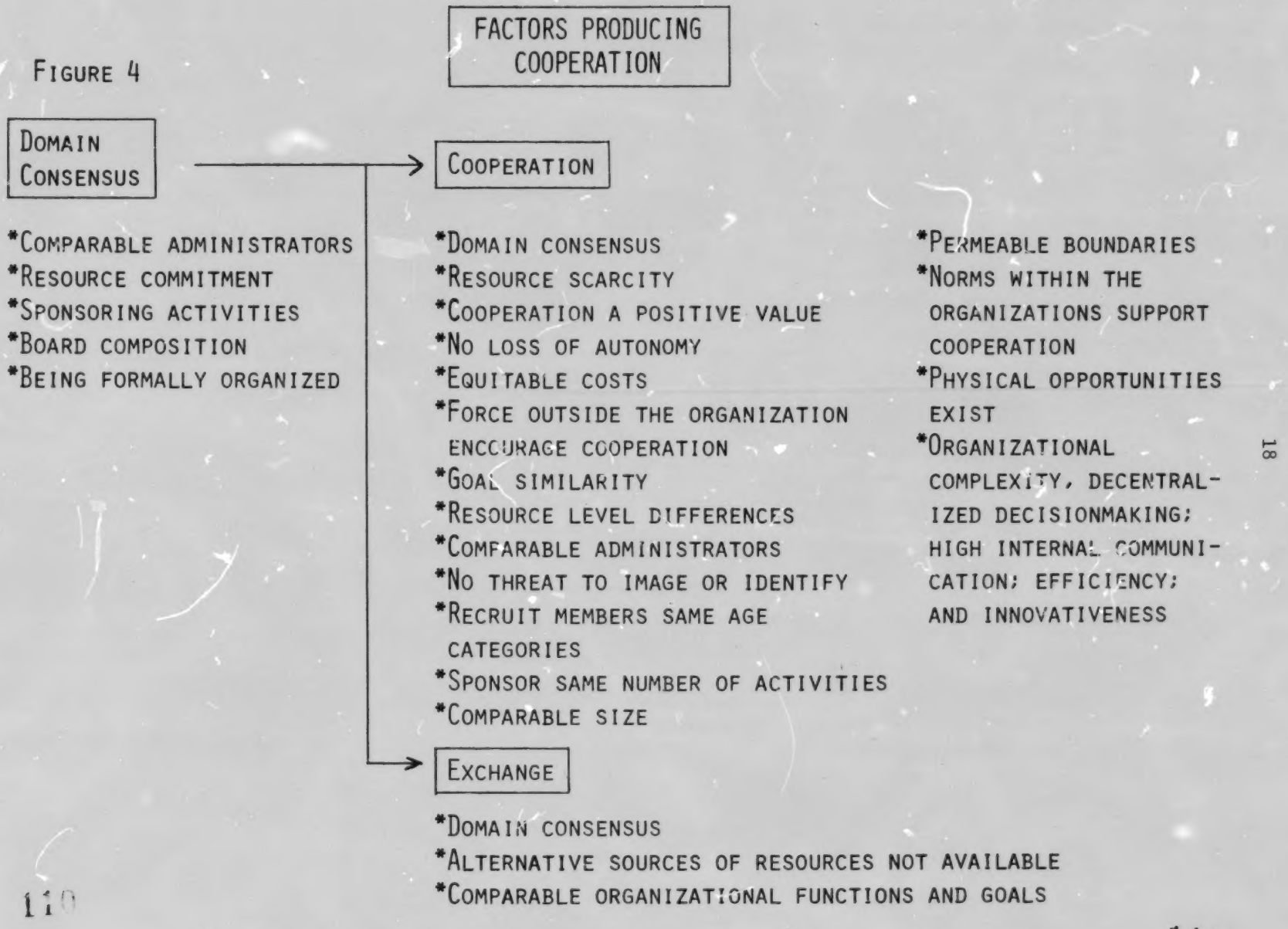

FACTORS PRODUCING COOPERATION
DOMAIN CONSENSUS
*COMPARABLE ADMINISTRATORS
*RESOURCE COMMITMENT
*SPONSORING ACTIVITIES
*BOARD COMPOSITION
*BEING FORMALLY ORGANIZED
COOPERATION
*DOMAIN CONSENSUS
*RESOURCE SCARCITY
*COOPERATION A POSITIVE VALUE
*NO LOSS OF AUTONOMY
*EQUITABLE COSTS
*FORCE OUTSIDE THE ORGANIZATION ENCOURAGE COOPERATION
*GOAL SIMILARITY
*RESOURCE LEVEL DIFFERENCES
*COMPARABLE ADMINISTRATORS
*NO THREAT TO IMAGE OR IDENTIFY
*RECRUIT MEMBERS SAME AGE CATEGORIES
*SPONSOR SAME NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES
*COMPARABLE SIZE
*PERMEABLE BOUNDARIES
*NORMS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORT COOPERATION
*PHYSICAL OPPORTUNITIES EXIST
*ORGANIZATIONAL COMPLEXITY, DECENTRALIZED DECISIONMAKING; HIGH INTERNAL COMMUNICATION; EFFICIENCY; AND INNOVATIVENESS
EXCHANGE
*DOMAIN CONSENSUS
*ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF RESOURCES NOT AVAILABLE
*COMPARABLE ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONS AND GOALS

FIGURE 5

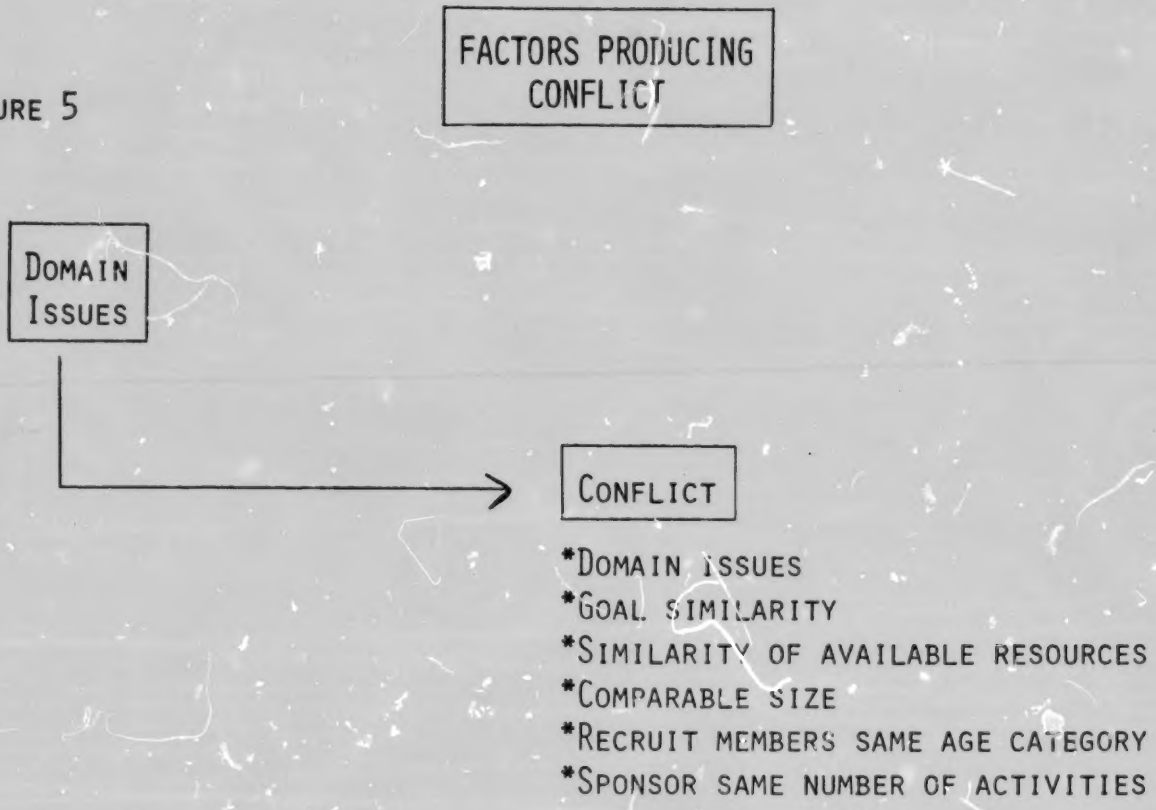

FACTORS PRODUCING CONFLICT
DOMAIN ISSUES
CONFLICT
*DOMAIN ISSUES
*GOAL SIMILARITY
*SIMILARITY OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES
*COMPARABLE SIZE
*RECRUIT MEMBERS SAME AGE CATEGORY
*SPONSOR SAME NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES

FIGURE 6

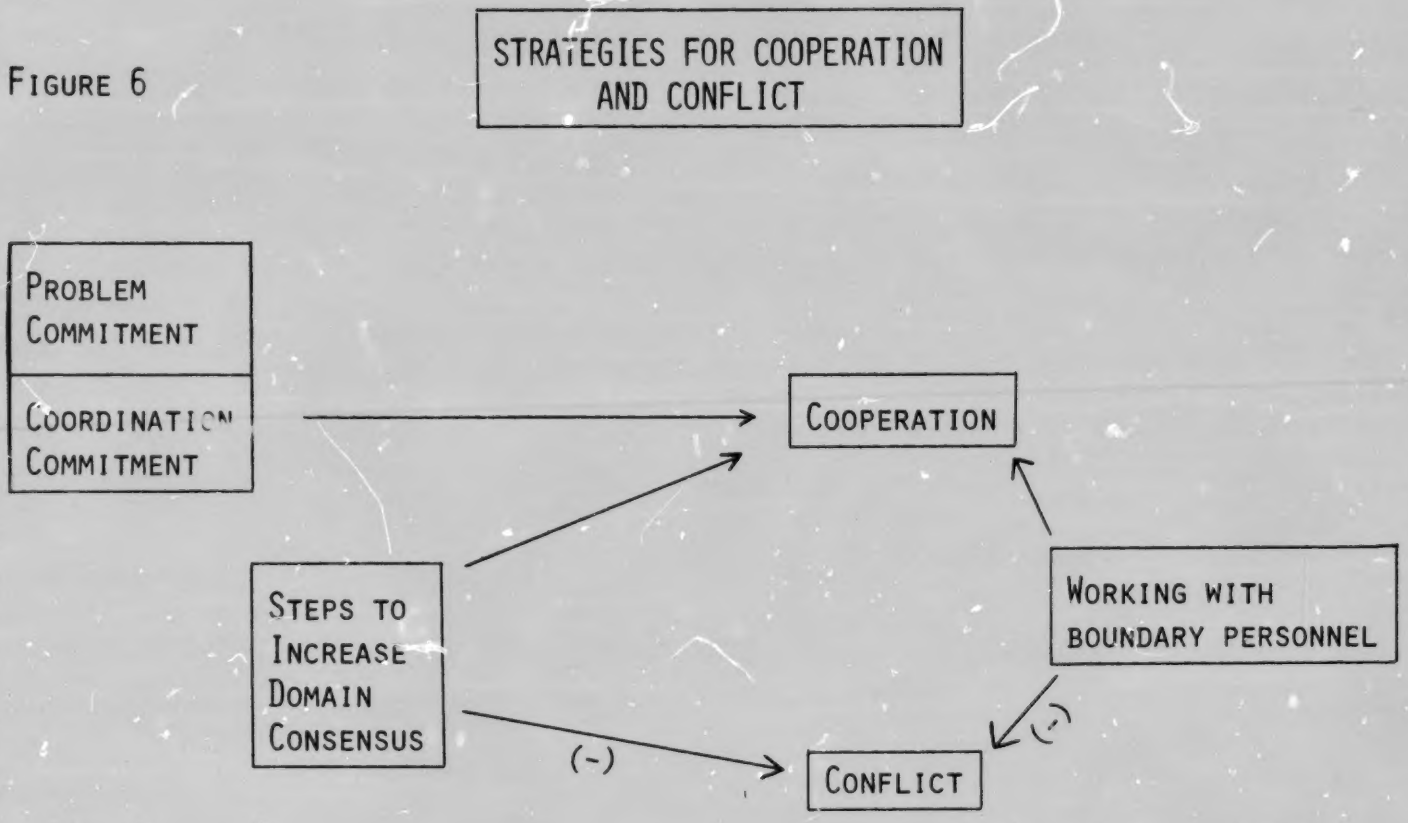

STRATEGIES FOR COOPERATION AND CONFLICT
PROBLEM COMMITMENT
COORDINATION COMMITMENT
COOPERATION
STEPS TO INCREASE DOMAIN CONSENSUS
WORKING WITH BOUNDARY PERSONNEL
(-)
(-)
CONFLICT

Figure 7: PROBLEM COMMITMENT

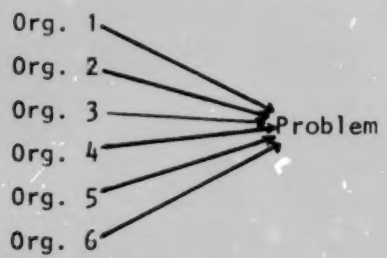
Checklist to Develop Problem Commitment

Each organization must become committed to the problem before it will be willing to work with other organizations on the problem. An effective coordinator knows when and how to use strategies to convince an organization to reevaluate and change its priorities.

1. Determine the priority objectives for each key organization.
   a Where does your problem fit in their priority list?
   b Will it be necessary to get them to change priorities?
2. If we need to change an organization's priority list:
   a) We need to know the decision-makers who can change the priorities:
      1. Formal officers.
      2. Executive committee.
      3. Informal leaders.
      4. Membership.
      5. State or national approval.
   b) We need to know what communication will have to take place within the organization before problem priority changes can occur.
      1. Informal interaction.
      2. Printed information.
      3. Formal meetings.
      4. Formal vote.
3. Strategies to change priorities:
   a) Exploit a crisis.
   b) Use comparison.
   c) Use basic education.
   d) Emphasize reciprocal obligations.
   e) Demonstrations and trail.
   f) Evidence based on citizens preferences.
   g) Point out the costs and benefits.

Worksheet:
Organizational
Decisions

Figure 8: PROBLEM COMMITMENT



List the 6 key organizations to be coordinated:	Is organization committed to the Problem? YES (✓)	NO (✓)	If "NO", how would you get organizations committed? Which decision makers?	Which strategy?
VERY IMPORTANT				
Org. 1				
Org. 2				
Org. 3				
IMPORTANT				
Org. 4				
Org. 5				
Org. 6				

Figure 9: COORDINATION COMMITMENT

Checklist to Develop Coordination Commitment

Organizations may be committed to the problem (step 4) but may not be committed to coordinate with other organizations in helping to solve the problem. A coordinator needs to know why organizations are or are not willing to coordinate. Also, the coordinator needs to be able to use strategies to develop coordination commitment.

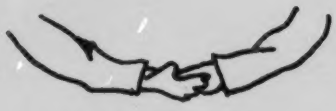
	Reasons For coordination:	Reasons Against Coordination:
Pressure:	From government From agencies Public demand Interdependence of programs	Differences in organizational structures Little knowledge of other organizations Adverse member reaction Adverse public reaction Agreements not clearly spelled out Evaluation by other organizations
Funds:	Cost sharing Available from state and federal Future benefits	Unequal costs to organizations Too large a proportion of total budget required Difficult to terminate unsuccessful relationships
Autonomy:	Autonomy loss only in selected area for limited time	Outside control Loss of clients Loss of decision-making power Who will get "credit"? Loss of control over funds
Expertise:	Have available staff who are experienced	Staff not trained Staff doesn't want to work with para-professionals Too much staff time required
Past Experience:	Relevant experience on comparable projects and/or problems	Little knowledge about problem area Organization hasn't participated in coordinated efforts before

* *

SEE BOTTOM OF NEXT CHECKLIST PAGE FOR GENERAL STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP COORDINATION COMMITMENT

Worksheet:
Organizational
Decisions

Figure 10: COORDINATION COMMITMENT



List the 6 key organizations to be coordinated.	Is each organization willing to take part in a coordinated effort. YES (✓)	NO (✓)	If "Yes," why?	If "No," why not?	If "No," what strategies would you use to get organizations committed?
VERY IMPORTANT					
Org. 1					
Org. 2					
Org. 3					
IMPORTANT					
Org. 4					
Org. 5					
Org. 6					

Figure 11: CONSENSUS

Checklist to Develop Consensus

If a high degree of consensus exists, all the key organizations want to work together. Sometimes one or more organizations wants to "go it alone" or leave another organization out. Then, a coordinator may have to build the consensus among organizations.

A. Checklist of reasons an organization may not want to work with another specific organization:

1. Disagree on defining the problem.
2. Disagree on how to accomplish the task.
3. Disagree on resources needed.
4. Too many resources expected.
5. Personality conflict between organizational staffs.
6. Professionals don't want to work with non-professionals.
7. Bad experience with past coordination efforts.
8. Fear or loss of autonomy.

B. Checklist of strategies to produce consensus:

1. Emphasize mutual interdependence between key organizations.
2. Spell out clearly the limited areas of cooperation needed and the time period.
3. Review all other strategies that can be used to influence decisions made by organizations.

Three General Strategies to Help Get Coordination Commitment and Consensus (and if needed, Problem Commitment):

A. Empathy: The Coordinator's first step:
1. The Coordinator puts himself "in the shoes" of a representative from the reluctant organization and tries to convince himself to coordinate.
2. The Coordinator develops empathy for participants.

B. Reference Group Techniques:
1. Determine the decision-makers in the reluctant organization.
2. How do the decision-makers make decisions? Influences from within their own organizations.
3. Determine what the communication is like when decisions about priorities are made.
4. What decision-makers in other organizations can influence those in the reluctant organizations? Work with these people?
5. Find out if local power actors can exert influence on the organizational decision-makers. Cultivate support.
6. Find out if other levels of organizations can influence the local unit. Cultivate support.

C. Proportionate Analysis:
1. The proportion of an organization's resources needed for coordination may be more important than the absolute amount of resources needed (compared to other organizations).
2. The larger the proportion of resources needed, the less likely the organization will wish to participate.

Figure 12: CONSENSUS

List the 6 key organizations to be coordinated.	Which key organization(s) might this organization not like working with in a coordinated effort?	Reasons for not wanting to work with this organization?	What strategy will you use to obtain consensus between the organizations?
VERY IMPORTANT			
Org. 1			
Org. 2			
Org. 3			
IMPORTANT			
Org. 4			
Org. 5			
Org. 6			

FIGURE 13

COORDINATION MAY BENEFIT FROM CREATIVE TENSION. DON'T ALWAYS AVOID CONFLICT.

- HOW CAN CONFLICT BE USEFUL?
  - PROBLEMS CAN BE AIRED AND SOLUTIONS EXPLORED
  - DEFENDING ONE'S POINT OF VIEW SOMETIMES HELPS ONE BETTER UNDERSTAND IT
  - INTEREST AND CURIOSITY ARE STIMULATED
  - ALTERNATIVE MEANS AND ENDS ARE CONSIDERED
  - PRESSURE OCCURS FOR PRESENTING A UNIFIED ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGE
  - MAY CAUSE OTHERS TO WORK TOGETHER MORE CLOSELY
  - CONFLICT GENUINELY RESOLVED MAY PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR A MORE COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP

FIGURE 14

THE COORDINATOR MAY DECIDE TO DO NOTHING. WHEN CONFLICT IS NOT RESOLVED THE CONFLICT IS HARMFUL FOR THE COORDINATION EFFORT.

UNRESOLVED CONFLICT MAY MEAN THAT:	IMPLICATIONS FOR COORDINATION EFFORT:
ORGANIZATIONS CEASE TO WORK ON THE PROBLEM.	MAY NEED TO RECRUIT NEW ORGANIZATIONS.
CONFLICT CONTINUES.	COORDINATION EFFORTS MAY BE LESS EFFECTIVE.

FIGURE 15

AN ORGANIZATION MAY VOLUNTARILY CONCEDE IN A CONFLICT SITUATION. THE ORGANIZATION MAY VIEW ITSELF AS A MARTYR.

IMPLICATION FOR COORDINATION EFFORT:	IMPLICATION FOR THE COORDINATOR:
MAY STIMULATE FUTURE COORDINATION. ANOTHER ORGANIZATION WILL CONCEDE NEXT TIME.	MAY SUFFER NO LOSS IN STATUS, OR MAY BE BLAMED FOR ALLOWING A MARTYR TO DEVELOP.

FIGURE 16

WHEN THE COORDINATOR ACTS AS A NEUTRAL THIRD PARTY IN RESOLVING CONFLICT THE COORDINATION STANDS A CHANCE OF SUCCESS.

POSSIBLE THIRD PARTY COORDINATOR ROLES:	IMPLICATIONS FOR COORDINATION:	IMPLICATIONS FOR COORDINATOR:
HELP REDEFINE THE PROBLEM.	POSSIBILITY FOR SUCCESS MAY INCREASE.	STATUS MAY INCREASE.
ACT AS A SCAPEGOAT.		SCAPEGOAT ROLE MAY CAUSE LOSS OF STATUS.
HELP REDEFINE SOLUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.		MORE ORGANIZATIONS MAY TURN TO THE COORDINATOR FOR HELP.

30

FIGURE 17

HOW CAN A COORDINATOR MANAGE THE CONFLICT?
HOW TO MAKE IT USEFUL?

PREVENTATIVE PRACTICES:

- TALK WITH OTHERS NOT INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT
- TRAIN PERSONNEL IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION BEFORE A CONFLICT ARISES
- LEARN HOW SIMILAR CONFLICTS HAVE BEEN SOLVED
- SPECIFY CAREFULLY THE ACTIVITIES TO BE COORDINATED AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS
- SPECIFY EARLY HOW REWARDS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED. WHO IS "TO GET CREDIT."

FIGURE 18

HOW CAN A COORDINATOR MANAGE THE CONFLICT?
HOW TO MAKE IT USEFUL?

TECHNIQUES TO MANAGE THE CONFLICT:

- ACCEPT THAT CONFLICT IS PRESENT
- UNDERSTAND SPECIFICALLY WHAT THE CONFLICT IS
- DON'T BE DEFENSIVE ABOUT SELFISH INTERESTS
- DON'T ACCEPT THE STATUS QUO
- BE WILLING TO COMPROMISE NOW FOR BENEFITS LATER
- REDUCE THE THREAT OF SOLVING CONFLICT TO REDUCE DEFENSIVENESS
- DECREASE THE DEMANDS ON SOME ORGANIZATIONS

MANAGING STRESS IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

by

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University of Illinois

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Applied Management Research, Inc.

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Graduate Assistant

University of Illinois

STRESS IN COMMUNITY GROUPS[1]

The objective of this paper is to facilitate an understanding of stress and how it affects behavior. To achieve these objectives, stress is operationally defined and theories and research that pertain to stress are presented.

Understanding Stress

Stress is a term that is familiar to everyone because we have all experienced it. We live in crowded cities and suffer from pressures at work; we lose people who are close to us and experience conflicts with people around us. However, an operational definition of stress from a behavioral science point of view is not fully understood by everyone. Operationally, stress can be defined as a physiological reaction to anything that threatens our survival [14, 15]. When threatened, the body creates extra energy to fight off the threat. Stress is the uncomfortable condition we experience when the body has created excess energy with which to defend itself. Stress is a response rather than a stimulus. In fact, it is a response to a wide variety of dangers. These dangers can be physiological, such as bodily harm and injury, but are often psychological, such as fear, hurt feelings, frustration, guilt, or shame.

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[1]This paper was published in 1975 with the same title by the Agricultural Extension Services of Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, South Dakota, Missouri, Ohio, Minnesota, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is part of an 11-publication series about community resource development and human relations. Publication number is 36-1/36-11.

Stimuli to stress

As pointed out in the previous section, stress can be caused by a number of different factors. Sources of stress can be classified in three ways [4]: 1) physiological stress, such as surgery, injury, or other threats to physical well-being; 2) psychological stress, such as intense competition and frustration; and 3) environmental stress, such as heat, cold, or noise.

In our daily lives, the most frequent sources of stress are: 1) fear -- being afraid of some physical or psychological danger; 2) an overload or underload situation -- having too many pressures or no pressures at all; 3) life changes -- experiencing a major change in our way of life; and 4) ambiguity -- being uncertain about a situation, our role, or other people's expectations. Each of these sources of stress is examined in terms of how it affects our lives as individuals and as leaders. Special emphasis is placed on recognizing these factors as possible sources of stress in our own lives of those of others.

Stress as a reaction to fear

To more clearly understand stress as a reaction to fear, we will consider briefly the biological purpose of fear. In the struggle for existence when prehistoric man encountered situations in which he had to escape or else perish, fear functioned by stimulating energy. Fear helped generate the energy that enabled man to excape or run away. Today, our physical reaction to fear remains as it was long ago. That is, when we fear something, our body produces extra energy for "fights or flight" [1]. In our society, however, social norms usually do not allow us

physically either to fight or to run away, so some extra energy remains unspent [7].

Biological sources If one biological purpose of fear is to insure survival, then fear will be aroused when we percieve danger or anticipate that our survival is endangered. Most people associate fear with accidents, sickness, burglars, or muggers. These incidents usually are relatively infrequent in a person's life. However, for people who live in unsafe neighborhoods, physical harm may be a very real source of fear.

Emotional sources Fear, as we experience it in our daily lives, usually stems from an entirely different set of causes. The dangers that threaten us most often are threats to our ego, especially if survival is thought of in terms of physical survival as well as the survival of the personality. Fear is far more likely to be a fear of being disliked, ridiculed, and misunderstood, or a fear of disapproval, sarcasm, being imposed on, and loneliness. One can also fear the loss of love, power, and prestige. Another source of fear is the fear of inadequacy. We anticipate that something will happen with which we cannot cope, so we feel helpless. These are all threats to our emotional safety.

Stress as a reaction to overload and underload

A very common source of stress is being under pressure. Both too much and too little pressure have been found to create stress.

Overload Most people have experienced the stress that occurs when one has too much to do or must do a lot in a very short time. Time and work pressures create an overload of "stimulation" with which our system must deal. For example, when workers are pressured to produce

more, productivity will go up, but the "fatigue index" and other indicators of stress will also rise significantly [7].

There is also another form of overload that stems from environmental factors. Excessive heat, cold, or noise levels, lack of privacy, or a high population density can all overstimulate a person's system and create severe stress [1]. People who live in large cities often experience this kind of environmental overload, creating a constant strain that is only reduced if they take a vacation or move to the country.

Underload More recently researchers have found that too little stimulation from the environment may produce just as much stress as too much. Very monotonous, repetitive tasks and meaningless activities, especially if one cannot escape from them, can generate a considerable amount of stress [5, 10, 11]. This explains why some people who have jobs that are below their potential become very frustrated if they are unable to find other outlets for their energies.

Optimal load There appears to be an optimal level of stimulation at which people are sufficiently challenged to utilize their full potential without being overburdened. In terms of work environments, this means that a moderately demanding situation would be better than either a very strict and demanding environment or an overly permissive one. The optimum amount of challenge, however, can vary significantly from one individual to another. Some people thrive under large work loads and feel challenged by time pressures that would create real stress for others.

Stress as a reaction to life changes

Going on a honeymoon or inheriting a considerable amount of money are usually not thought of as producing stress. Yet, all significant life changes, whether they are considered happy or unhappy, involve stress [18]. Life changes require adaption. They take a toll on the physical organism. For example, during a two-year period following some major life change such as the death of a spouse, a divorce, or a change of jobs, a person is more likely to experience stress and to contact some physical or emotional disease.

Life-change units Recently, some researchers compiled a list of major life events and determined their stress value in "life-change units" (LCUs). The death of a spouse was rated as requiring the greatest adaptation and received a mean value of 100. Some other examples are: divorce, 73; marital reconciliation, 45; marriage, 50; fired at work, 47; outstanding personal achievement, 28; change in work hours or conditions, 20. The least stressful event, according to the authors, was a minor violation of the law, rating a mean value of 11 LCUs [6]. Knowing the kinds of changes that a person went through recently not only helps to explain what may happen in terms of health but can also be used to predict how susceptible the person will be to injury. One researcher found that he could predict the probability of accidents and injuries to football players on the basis of the number and magnitude of their life changes during the previous year [16]. In the high-LCU group, 50 percent of the players were injured by the end of the season, versus 9 percent of the low-LCU group.

The findings make us aware that change has its price. The price we pay is in decreased resistance to other forms of stress. In the year following some major life change, our guard may be up but our resistance may be low, making us more vulnerable to illness and accidents.

Stress as a reaction to ambiquity

When we take a new job, move to another part of the country, or go to a different country altogether, our situation will be somewhat ambiguous at first [17]. We may not know exactly what our role is in the new setting. We may be unable to read some of the cues that govern interactions between people, and our own behavior styles may seem somewhat out of place. We want to respond to our environment; being unable to find out the appropriate response, we are left with excess energy and thus experience stress [3]. A good example of this kind of stress is the way people feel during the first weeks on a new job. Without prior experience in a particular field, expecially, a person may feel vaguely uncomfortable for a while. Job descriptions and training periods help but usually do not eliminate all the uncertainty that goes with being new in a field.

SOURCE	EXAMPLES
Fear	Fear of physical harm: snakes, accidents, sickness. Fear of emotional harm: ridicule, sarcasm, loss of love.
Over- and Under-Load	Work and people pressures, total lack of stimulation. Environmental stimuli: noise, heat, cold, crowding.
Life Changes	Loss of a loved person, change of jobs, being fired. Getting married, inheriting money, outstanding achievement.
Ambiguity	Everything novel, unknown, unstructured: a new job, going to another part of the country, or to another country.

Figure 1

Individual Differences and Stress

In this section we discuss how individual differences affect our reactions to stress. Why does something bother you but not your neighbor? Why do we simply feel challenged in a situation that is too much for someone else? If we want to help others deal with stress more effectively, we have to remember that all people have unique personalities, backgrounds, and life experiences that affect their reactions to stress. Some of the reasons for different stress reactions are perception, motivation, and stress tolerance.

Perception

Research indicates that our interpretation of the events that happen to us will affect our reaction. For stress to occur, we have to perceive a situation as stressful in the first place. Stress "is in the eye of the perceiver" [3; p. 457]. That is, the probability of stress in a particular siutation depends on the specific meaning we attach to the situation. If we interpret something as dangerous or threatening, we will experience stress. If we think that a noise in the middle of the night is probably a burglar, for instance, we will experience more stress than if we assume that the noise is a creaking floor. Why do our perceptions of what is happening around us vary so widely?

In the first place, people have different resources to deal with a situation. A very bright student is better equipped to solve a difficult problem than someone who is not so bright. One works with a challenge; the other works under stress. A person with a lot of charm may turn an embarrassing situation into a job; a shy person may feel awkward and withdraw.

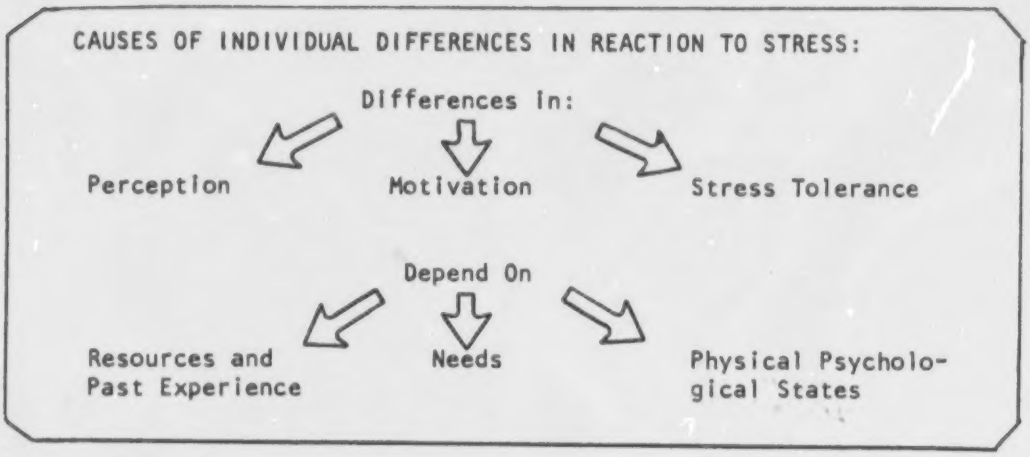

Figure 2

In the second place, people have different backgrounds and past experiences that will affect their perception of things and events. A child who was once bitten by a dog is very likely to still be afraid of such animals. A person who has always done well in school will probably be reasonably confident about handling a difficult subject. Novel, unknown situations create stress for some people because of the person's lack of experience and because he may not know how he will measure up to an unknown threat: "The devil you know is better than the devil you don't know."

Motivation

Our motivation patterns influence the occurrence of stress, too [12]. Motivation is closely related to needs. Persons with a great need for approval and achievement will probably be more upset by disapproval from the boss than would other people. A professional with strong achievement needs will be more affected by not getting a promotion than one who

does not care. Differences in levels of motivation can often explain differences in stress reactions.

Stress tolerance

There is one other important source for differences between individuals as they experience stress. We call this factor "stress tolerance." People who have a high stress tolerance are able to respond to stress constructively rather than destructively. Although stress tolerance is probably an innate characteristic in part, it also depends on one's upbringing. Children with a low stress tolerance often have parents who are either very punitive and controlling or very permissive. Parents of stress-tolerant children are "middle-of-the-roaders" when it comes to discipline. This means that people can learn to use constructive responses to stress [8].

How do people with a high stress tolerance differ from those who lack it? Most important is the fact that those who can tolerate high levels of stress do not become discouraged by failure, disapproval, or adversity. On the contrary, they seem to be able to accept dangers and mishaps as challenges rather than as threats. For example, astronauts have a very high stress tolerance [13]. They actually seek out stress and then are continually challenged to improve their performance. Stress tolerance is a valuable trait, and it can be learned by acquiring sound adaption skills.

Reactions to Stress

How do we deal with stress when it occurs? The excess energy generated by the body when an individual is under stress is uncomfortable

because the body is in disequilibrium. We are "all charged up" and ready to fight or run away from the threat. The natural response to this state is to actually run away or fight and to physically expend the energy. But in our society, these are usually not considered to be acceptable responses.

The emotionally healthy person recognizes the problem of storing up energy and of energy utilization in the body. Such a person realizes that when constant little everyday threats to emotional security cause the generation of excess energy, somehow that energy must be used up. Physical exercise, physical work, jogging, and participating in sports are all excellent ways to utilize extra energy.

Expressive people can use up energy in conversation, bodily movements, artistic activities, and other creative pursuits. Energy can also be used up in fighting, yelling, attacking property, complaining, and participating in riots. People who have no outlets for using up their stress energy tend to get ulcers and other physical ailments because their bodies tend to remain "revved up" with everything working faster than it should.

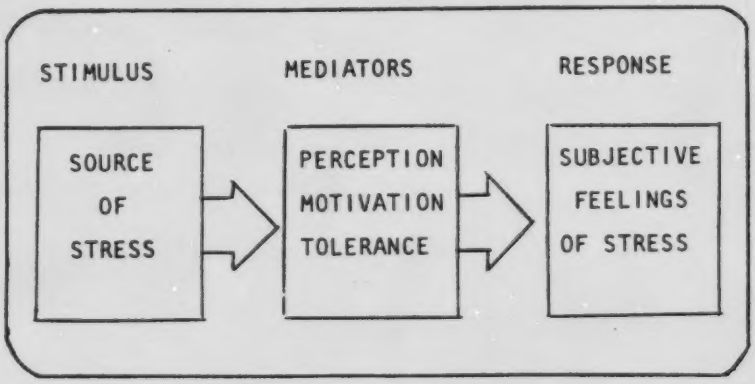

Figure 3

For purposes of further analysis, we can categorize the reactions to stress as "agression," "withdrawal," and "adaption," as indicated in Figure 4 [2]. Aggression is one method for a person to quickly expend his energy even though it may not always be socially acceptable. Withdrawal is an attempt to slow down the creation of surplus energy by escaping from the fear-inducing situation. Adaptation is the ability to attack the source of stress in a problem-solving manner and to invent a solution. This can only occur, however, if the source of stress can be influenced by us in some way. We will now describe these reactions to stress in greater detail.

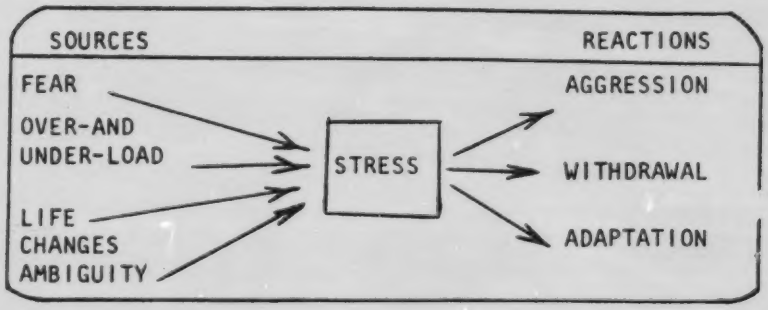

Figure 4

Aggression

Aggression is a way of quickly expending surplus energy. Aggression can be expressed physically or verbally, and it can also be displaced -- that is, directed elsewhere than at the actual source.

Physical aggression This is a direct way of expressing a state of stress. Considerable relief from stress can be gained by physically

exhausting excess energy. Socially, however, there are acceptable and unacceptable forms of aggression. Socially unacceptable aggressive behavior is destructive, such as physically attacking others, vandalizing property, engaging in riots, and the like. The penalties for such behavior are usually heavy. Bringing up children is partly teaching them the negative consequences of socially unacceptable, destructive forms of aggression. We teach them by pointing out alternative ways of channeling their aggressive energies into acceptable behavior. Competitive sports are socially acceptable expressions of aggression.

Verbal aggression This is a typically human way of dealing with stress. Instead of hurting someone physically, we can hurt his emotional safety by making a verbal response. Verbal aggression involves such acts as creating blame, ridicule, sarcasm, belittlement, and so on. Verbal aggression can also remain completely internal, as when we foster a silent hatred or dislike for someone without ever expressing it.

Displaced aggression Instead of always expressing our aggression toward the source of our stress, we often direct it somewhere else. We usually do this when we sense that a direct, aggressive response will create more problems than it would solve. If the siutation is such that direct aggression will have very negative consequences, we may decide to postpone our aggression until we find a more harmless "victim." For example, a person may be under stress because of a work situation but may choose to direct the aggression toward a spouse, one of the children, a gas station attendant, or someone else not involved in producing stress in the original situation.

It should be understood, however, that aggressive responses do not eliminate the source of stress. Aggression only temporarily alleviates the uncomfortable feelings associated with an excess of energy by using up some of that energy.

Withdrawal

This is another reaction to stress. Withdrawal is an attempt to slow down the creation of surplus energy or stress by escaping from the fear-inducing situation. In attempting to escape from the source of stress, one can withdraw either physically or mentally.

Physical withdrawal When we withdraw physically, we avoid the fear-inducing situation. For instance, if a man has problems at work, he may stay away or feign sickness to avoid the source of his stress. Students sometimes do likewise. In extreme cases individuals may actually make themselves physically ill under such circumstances. Physical withdrawal explains, in part, some absenteeism in schools and industry. In the end, however, withdrawal often has negative consequences.

Mental withdrawal Instead of physically withdrawing from the stress-inducing situation, which may have negative results, a person can withdraw mentally into a world of his own. This may take the form of daydreaming, sleeping, or becoming very apathetic. Mental withdrawal helps us escape from a fear-inducing reality or it may be a reaction to boredom that is equally stress-producing. One form of withdrawal is the use of drugs or alcohol. Drugs can alleviate feelings of stress temporarily, seeming to help the individual to escape from the real world.

AGGRESSION	OVERT OR COVERT VERBAL OR PHYSICAL DIRECT OR DISPLACED
WITHDRAWAL	PHYSICAL OR MENTAL
ADAPTATION	TAKING ACTION REDEFINING THE SITUATION TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL OR OTHER ACTIVITIES

Figure 5

Adaption

When we adapt to stress, we seek ways of eliminating the source of stress. If the source is beyond our control, we try to find ways to utilize our excess energy in a nondestructive manner. We can adapt to stress in a number of different ways: 1) taking some action that will eliminate the source of stress, 2) redefining the situation, or 3) planning other activities or withdrawing temporarily in order to feel more comfortable.

Taking action If we want to eliminate the source of stress, the first step is to decide whether we can influence the situation in any way or whether it is something that is beyond our control. Some situations, such an accident or illness, cannot be "solved," and the only adaption one can make is to learn to live with the situation.

Often, however, a stress situation is totally or partially within our control. What we need is to decide to do something about it and then follow through. For example, we can make a budget and stick to it, alleviating stress over money matters, or we can seek to change jobs if our old one causes us too much stress.

One factor that can help us to solve our problems is interpersonal interactions. If we talk about our stress to someone, we may discover alternate solutions. People often find after talking to a friend or a counselor that they have more control over their situation than they thought and greater confidence in their own ability to solve the problem. Support from another person can help us face our problems and make decisions that are difficult for us to make by ourselves.

Redefining the situation If it is not possible for a person to change a stress-producing situation, adaptation can be made by developing a philosophy that enables the individual to see things less emotionally. He can tell himself that worse things could have happened and that compared with other people, he is not doing too badly. If the feeling of stress is the result of a conflict, people sometimes try to solve the problem by invalidating the person or the event that caused the conflict. If someone does not like our work, for instance, we may try to solve this conflict by telling ourselves that he is not an expert or that we did not like him anyway. If we fail a test or an examination, we may try to convince ourselves that it was not so important after all.

Redefining the situation involves mental strategies that reduce our emotional involvement with the source of the stress. When we are less

involved, we are less threatened and so we generate less stress energy. Often, talking with someone helps us to redefine a situation so that we can handle it. Talking relieves some of our immediate stress pressures.

Temporary activities or withdrawals When there is nothing we can do about the source of stress and when redefining the situation does not help either, one can deal with stress temporarily by withdrawing, perhaps to watch television or to take a trip. Also, a person can consciously choose some form of physical activity that will utilize the excess energy. Going swimming, playing tennis, jogging, or mowing the lawn are all excellent ways to cope with stress temporarily.

TYPE OF REACTION	PRIMARY PURPOSE	EFFECTIVENESS
AGGRESSION	Quick release of energy.	Efficient way to relieve stress. Does not solve problems. May have negative social consequences.
WITHDRAWAL	Slowing down creation of energy.	Relieves discomfort of surplus energy. Does not solve problem. Negative social consequences.
ADAPTATION:		
Taking action.	Eliminating source of stress.	Solves problem. Possible only if we have power to do so.
Redefining situation.	Developing new philosophy.	Solves problem mentally. Not all problems can be easily redefined.
Temporary withdrawal, physical activity.	Temporary release or slowing down of energy generation.	Relieves discomfort temporarily. Way to live with stress that can not be dealt with otherwise.

Figure 6

Developing Skills for Coping with Stress

It is important to have some knowledge of how we can effectively cope with our own stress or how to deal with others who are under stress.

Admitting stress One of the most important factors that characterizes the skilled manager of stress is that he is able to recognize his own stress. By facing up to his fear, he does not block the energies that are generated to fight off the threat. Thus, he has energy available that often remains untapped in others. The astronauts, in a previous example, used their stress energy in this way. Instead of denying the fact that they had failed, perhaps to make the flight team, they carefully analyzed possible faults and tried to overcome them. They used the stress energy of "failing" to succeed the next time.

Less-skillful stress managers tend to deny their fear and frustration. The persons who often fare the worst under stress conditions are those who have been brought up to feel that it is "shameful" to be afraid. By denying their fears, they also block energies available to deal with them and, thus, are unable to act. Their energy buildup, instead of being used, is experienced as stress.

Identifying the source Once we can identify when we are experiencing excess energy periods (stress), we must try to determine the sources of stress. Making a list of problem sources may help an individual to focus on the stimuli causing the stress and to determine if there is anything he can do about them.

Utilizing energy If we cannot eliminate the stress, we must choose a way to use up the energy. We should come to realize that we are free to choose what we do with this excess.

Physically expending energy is the quickest way to use up stress energy. Therefore, physical work, exercise, walking, participation in sports, and the like are excellent ways of relieving stress. However, talking, writing, drawing, singing, and creative activities are all useful ways of expending energy, too.

We must recognize that we will never fully eliminate the little everyday threats that generate stress. Therefore, we must make a continuous and conscious effort to remain in equilibrium by choosing ways to expend excess energy. The energy must be used one way or another; why not put it to good use?

The creative use of stress If we want to become skilled stress managers, it is important to keep in mind that stress is not all bad, as many people seem to think. For those who know how to live with it, stress is a source of energy and creativity that makes much of life worthwhile. Most of us know the feeling of satisfaction after working under pressure, succeeding at doing a good job. Acheivement makes us feel fulfilled. We experience the "farther reaches of human interaction" [9]. We can be surprised by our own potentialities, ones that may have been hidden but that surface when we are under pressure.

Stress, if dealt with creatively, can lead to a self-actualization and fulfillment. Living creatively with stress is a skill that many people have never fully developed. But stress management is a skill that can be learned if we are aware of what stress really is. When we realize that stress is energy, we can make this energy work creatively for us.

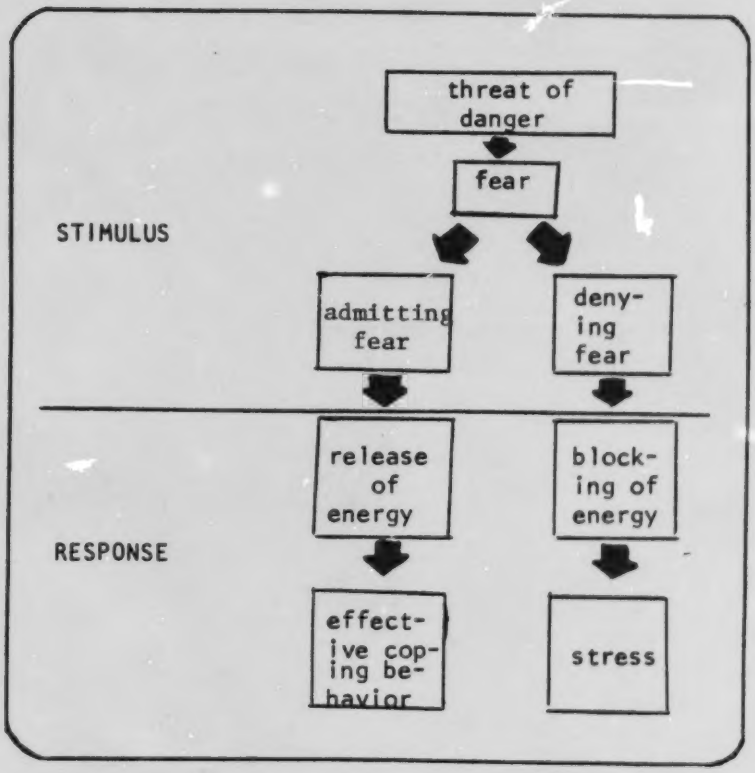

Figure 7

Personal Stress Profile

What sort of analysis can you make about your ability to deal with stress behavior in yourself and in others?

- Are you able to recognize feelings of stress without denying them?
- Are you aware of your habitual ways of dealing with stress?
- Is your method of stress management effective, or does it only create more problems?
- Do you make a conscious effort to deal with everyday stresses by putting stress energy to good use?

- In dealing with others, is your own behavior ever a source of stress?
- Do you recognize aggression and withdrawal as symptoms of stress?
- Are you able to respond to the stress behavior of others in a facilitating manner?
- Can you avoid compounding behaviors in counseling stress and provide the other person with outlets for his energy?

FACILITATING BEHAVIOR STYLES	BEHAVIOR BITS
Letting the other person take the lead.	Asking open-ended questions. Encouraging a person to go on Asking for his ideas and suggestions.
Suggesting possible alternatives.	"Have you thought of...?" "You might want to consider. .." "Maybe you could..."
Giving information and reinforcement.	Give own Information. Refer to an expert or library, specific books or source materials.
COMPOUNDING BEHAVIOR STYLES	**BEHAVIOR BITS**
Taking the lead in the exploration.	Doing all the talking. Coming up with all the alternatives. Limiting the discussion to one alternative.
Pushing own views.	"Now, in my opinion, you ought to..." "Now, listen to me..." "I think you should definitely do that."
Information overload.	"Snow job." Ignore feelings. Logical arguments, rational discussion.

Figure 11

STAGES	FACILITATING BEHAVIOR STYLES	COMPOUNDING BEHAVIOR BITS
Encouraging expression of feelings.	Short, neutral statements. Feeding back feelings. Relieving guilt, inadequancy.	Making judgments. Defending oneself. Giving advice.
Identifying sources of stress.	Asking open-ended questions. Communicating understanding. Testing reality.	Judging and blaming. Asking specific or "loaded" questions. Invalidating fears. Making unfavorable comparisons.
Relieving pressures.	Reducing work pressures. Modifying environment. Giving support.	Failing to act. Adding responsibility.
Facilitating adaptation.	Asking open-ended questions. Suggesting possible alternatives. Giving information.	Taking the lead in the exploration. Pushing own solutions. Creating an information overload.

Figure 12

Summary

Practicing socially acceptable behavior is difficult for people when they are under stress. This state of excess energy is uncomfortable, and the most natural response to it is to quickly expend the extra energy through aggressive behavior. If aggression is impossible because it is not socially acceptable, a person may choose to withdraw and slow down the creation of surplus energy. Aggression and withdrawal, however, do not attack the source of stress in a problem-solving manner, and both

are usually considered unacceptable in our society. When we work closely with people it is important that we can recognize behavior problems as symptoms of stress and to react to them appropriately. If we are able to communicate our understanding and empathy for a person's state of stress, we can be helpful in facilitating his effective adaption to it. If we are judgmental or advance our own views, we will only be compounding a person's stress, rather than relieving it.

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VALUE-FREE, OBJECTIVE EDUCATORS

by

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VALUE-FREE, OBJECTIVE EDUCATORS?[1]

From the earliest days of bringing information on yield-improvement or tilling innovations to contemporary programs in urban development and group counseling, Extension workers have viewed themselves primarily as educators. In this light, they often have interpreted their role as involving apolitical activities in which "neutral" information, knowlege, and skills are imparted to clients or constituents who thus will be better equipped to make "rational" choices about the problems or issues they face. Much of the discussion at the Zion workshop and the other papers in this volume formally support these basic underlying beliefs a) that better information will lead to better choices, and b) that the major role of the Extension agent is that of an educator who plays an important part in this sequence.

This paper is viewed as an extension of my major contribution ("Understanding Strategies and Developing Skills") to this volume. It treats what I believe to be important questions of the ethics of conflict intervention as they relate to the educator role assumed by the majority of Extension workers. My major message is that education is primarily and always a value-laden process and that educators (whatever their base or ideology) are neither neutral nor value-free -- but rather represent one set of values among many being presented to their clients. To deny this

[1]Some of the materials in parts II and III of this paper are adapted from James H. Laue and Gerald Cormick, "The Ethics of Intervention in Community Disputes," in Herbert Kelman, Gordon Bermant, and Donald Warwick (ed.), The Ethics of Social Intervention (Washington: Hemisphere, in press, 1978).

reality or to claim neutrality under the role of "educator" leads to great problems of strategy and Extension credibility as well as ethics, in my view. I propose that Extension workers need to continuously examine their values and ethics and to be open and explicit about them as they develop their programs and relate to their many constituencies.

The paper is organized in three sections. First, we undertake a brief analysis of the underlying values of Extension workers/educators and the ethical problems to which these value positions may lead in their work. In the second section, I propose a set of values regarding community conflict intervention which Extension educators may wish to consider as they analyze their work. In a final section several ethical principles are derived and applied to problems and cases which seem to be typical in Extension work.

The Extension Worker as Educator: Values and Ethical Considerations

Every professional has a conception of both the goals or values of the profession and of the appropriate roles one may play in pursuing the objectives. These conceptions are part of what may be called the ideology of the role-incumbent -- a set of underlying beliefs on which much of the practitioner's attitudes and behaviors are based.

I suggest that the broadest statement of the basic ideology of Extension is that persons ought to solve problems through a factually-based democratic process, and this process can be aided by Extension workers playing roles as objective educators. The values which flow from this ideology include:

a. Knowledge and skills are better than ignorance and incompetence in problem-solving.

b. "Rationality" is more helpful in problem-solving than "emotion."

c. The provision of information to persons facing problems will facilitate rational choices among alternatives.

d. The best way for Extension to facilitate the democratic process and good problem-solving is by providing objective information to decision-makers.

I share these values, but I am quick to point out that they are not the only possible values Extension workers could hold and, even more seriously, that information alone is not adequate to facilitate the democratic problem-solving process. In fact, in some circumstances provision of information may work against the achievement of the democratic values of participation and personal fulfillment. The reason is that the democratic process does not work properly unless all groups with a stake in the outcome have sufficient power to represent their own rights in the process.

The implication for Extension personnel is that education (even in its most limited sense as the provision of objective information) is only one intervention strategy among many and indeed may work to the advantage of some persons or groups in a given situation and against others. Not all clients or parties in a situation are equally prepared to use the education they may receive. The more powerful parties always are much more able to purchase and interpret information, mobilize resources for action and make application.

An obvious example would be a situation in which one of the parties involved in a conflict is not literate in English, yet a well-motivated, "objective" educator presents information (in print, electronic, or live medium) in English. In this case, neither the information nor the educator is neutral because the impact of the "educational experience" is not neutral -- rather it further empowers the more powerful (i.e., literate) parties.

Information is not neutral. It is a resource which can be a basis of power, and some parties in a conflict situation always are better prepared to utilize the information for their own goals than others. The more educated, the more powerful, the more technologically sophisticated is the person or group, the better able to use the information provided.

In this context we should underscore a point made in the other paper: all intervention changes the power configuration of the situation; therefore all intervention is political (i.e., concerned with power, or not neutral in its impact on power and decision-making). Thus, all intervention is a form of advocacy -- whether for party, outcome, or process.

Most conflict intervenors are party advocates or outcome advocates. The typical party advocate is the lawyer or the community organizer who works in behalf of one (or some) of the parties in a dispute. His/her aim is to win as much as possible of the resources to be allocated for the client. The outcome advocate is one whose primary loyalty is to a particular goal or policy rather than to a person or group -- a proponent of a national land use policy, for example.

The process advocate, on the other hand, is committed to promoting a fair and just process, based on the belief that good process will yield good outcomes which will satisfy the parties. The mediator and conciliator are good examples of process advocates, and I believe that this also is the type of advocacy largely represented by Extension workers. Most Extension workers would believe, for example, that everybody with a stake in a particular outcome or decision should have some say in the decision, that having good information is a prerequisite to intelligent participation in the decision-making process, and that an appropriate forum for the rational presentation and discussion of the information should be provided -- which can lead to a good decision. All of these are elements of good democratic process, but they are not values held by all decision makers -- especially those with adequate power to simply make the dicision in question without consultation with the constituency or clientele, and little need for accountability to them.

Timing is another important consideration. Information or facts (the major "products" delivered by persons playing a role as educator) are only useful in problem-solving if they are made available at the appropriate time. Again, the more powerful have the advantage: they usually get the relevant information first since they have the greater organizational resources (staff, long-distance telephones, time, etc.) and the personal networks. Regulations, guidelines, technical data, dated grant applications, ideas for alternative solutions, new planning techniques -- all are tools for empowerment if one has access to them at the proper time. Persons who control information also have the

ability to withhold it, again with greater ease when the parties involved are relatively powerless. "They really aren't ready for this" or "It would only raise their expectations and cause trouble" are two typical reasons for not vigorously pursuing the dissemination of information in some situations.

To summarize: the education role is not neutral; it is a potentially empowering activity. Information is a major source of power, and those who possess or control information relevant to a given situation use that information based on their values about the parties involved, the desired potential outcomes, and about the best process for dealing with the situation. Every decision by the Extension-educator represents a value choice -- whether about groups served, materials used, or timing of the intervention.

A Proposed Set of Values for Extension-Educators in Conflict

Every professional is called upon to made decisions every day, some affecting many people or much money (usually labeled as "important" decisions) and others affecting few people or resources ("minor" decisions). The personal decision is the unit act of social ethics. Decisions generally reflect values, so if a professional is to be aware of the ethical implications of his or her decisions, it is crucial to understand the underlying value base and not claim to be "value-free" or "neutral."

Proportional empowerment, justice, and freedom are the root values of the ethics I propose for Extension-educators and others who intervene in community disputes. Because the issue in all community disputes is

the ability of each interest group to advocate for its own needs, power becomes the central reality. Unless all parties to a dispute have some negotiable power, joint determination of the outcome is impossible and, therefore, the achievement of maximum social justice and personal freedom is unlikely.

Any move taken by conflict intervenors is subject to ethical inquiries about its impact on the lives and well-being of all the parties, their organizations, and the institutions and quality of life in the affected community or communities.

Ethics refers to a set of principles defining the rightness or wrongness of decisions. Any considerations of ethics must be based on assumptions about the nature of human beings. My basic assumption is that persons are by nature fallible, decision-making creatures who seek meaning. Human beings are, of course, many other things, but these are their most important characteristics, and this basic nature ought to be honored and fulfilled. Persons seek meaning through their interaction with other people. Persons are and ought to be treated as ends-in-themselves.

Three core values concerning appropriate goals for human beings and the social systems within which they live flow from this doctrine of persons: empowerment, justice, and freedom. Empowerment is the requisite condition of persons and groups to achieve the desired end-state of society -- justice. A just society is pr requisite to the maximum attainment of freedom by all persons in the system. The freedom to make responsible choices among a number of options and live with the consequences of those decisions is the process whereby the deepest forms of personal meaning are realized.

Freedom. A person's nature is most fully honored -- (i.e., deepest meaning is found) when (s)he has the maximum degree of freedom to determine his or her own destiny consistent with the common good. Freedom for the individual exists only when that person's membership groups have adequate power to negotiate rights and interests vis[1]a-vis their fellows.

Justice. Justice is the ultimate social good. The just social system would be one in which power (control of decisions) is diffused, decision-making is participatory, accountability for decisions is visible, and resources are adequate and equitably distributed. Justice can only result from the continuous interplay of individuals and groups adequately empowered to represent their own interests and with a minimum of superordinate umpiring to prevent power concentrations (and, therefore, abuses). Given human fallibility, a system of justice cannot be constructed and implanted on a social system by wise and/or powerful outsiders; it must emerge from the interplay of empowered, meaning-seeking individuals and groups.

Empowerment. Assuming all individuals and groups have a right to seek justice and freedom, empowerment for all is essential. To be fully human, individuals and their groups must make their own decisions and live with the consequences. Self-determination is impossible without negotiable power. Ultimately, no one "speaks for" another; individuals and groups must represent their own interests. Proportional empowerment becomes a crucial value. It refers to a condition in which all groups have developed their latent power to the point where they

can advocate for their own needs and rights; where they are capable of protecting their boundaries from wanton violation by others; where they are capable of negotiating their way with other empowered groups on the sure footing of respect rather than charity. Given the fallibility of even judges, sociologists, politicians, philosophers, theologians, and Extension officials, we can only trust that true substantive justice will flow from the procedural safeguard of proportional empowerment.

Applying this scheme of core values to community dispute intervention, I conclude that in a situation marked by a high degree of power imbalance among the parties, any intervention must enable the powerless party or parties to increase their power. Empowerment -- and justice and freedom - are ends in themselves so long as all persons and groups are equipped to advocate their interests to a similar degree. If only certain persons and groups are empowered, then other persons cannot protect themselves and speak for themselves, and they inevitably come to be wrongly treated as means rather than ends.

The coinage of community disputes is power -- the ability to make or at least influence the decisions which affect one's life in the community. The major ethical question which must be put to every intervenor is whether the intervention contributes to the ability of relatively powerless individuals and groups in the siutation to determine their own destinies to the greatest extent consistent with the common good.

Social change toward justice thus becomes the proper general goal for intervenors in community disputes and empowerment of relatively powerless individuals and groups becomes the immediate ethical mandate.

Settlement of community conflicts and crises per se should not be the over-riding goal for Extension workers and other community intervenors. When power imbalances are great -- as is the case with most community disputes -- a focus on settlement per se usually contributes to the strengthening of the status quo. Justice is only approached when all the parties involved in a dispute over power or resources have a share in shaping the settlement, i.e., when joint determination rather than unilateral determination is the mode of operation. Joint determination is not possible unless all parties have negotiable power.

Extension Ethics: Some Applications

The ethics of intervention in community disputes center on the nature and quality of the intervenor's decisions. Extension-educators can only be conscious of the impact of their decisions on the constituents with whom they work if they are fully aware of their own values.

In the previous section I offered one set of values on which community intervenors may base their ethical principles. Although each person develops his or her own ethical principles in the course of experience, I now want to suggest several such principles in my own ethical system which seem appropriate for Extension work. A suggested application for Extension-educators is offered with each principle.

a) Every action or decision of the intervenor should contribute to proportional empowerment of powerless groups for social change.

If a group of farmers is protesting the placement of high-voltage power lines across their property, and they are so unorganized (and, therefore, powerless) that the electric utility is about to break ground without any consultation with the property owners other than formal condemnation proceedings, the Extension-educator should find some way for the farmers' needs to be heard. Extension might suggest a series of hearings, arrange meetings between utility officials and farmer representatives, help organize the farmers so they can speak for themselves, or -- if the action is imminent -- be sure the farmers are aware of the possibility of getting an injunction to halt construction until the property owners' needs can be represented.

b) The intervenor should promote the ability of weaker parties to make their own best decisions by helping them obtain the necessary information and skills to implement power -- sources of funds, negotiating skills, legal information, etc. If action on a flood plain is in question, and the Corps of Engineers controls all the factual information on which planning is based, Extension-educators should see that the information is made available and interpreted to all affected groups. This may mean supplying technical experts to interpret the data to lay persons. It may mean informing affected parties of EPA guidelines for flood plain planning, or getting small farmers together with environmentalists with similar concerns, or perhaps assisting persons in finding the appropriate congressman, senator, or committee chairperson to whom a letter could be directed.

c) The rationale for an intervenor's decision should be conscious, explicit, and where possible, public. Keeping one's values out front

promotes both honesty and helpful self-assessment with oneself, and greater value sensitivity of the groups with whom the intervenor works, through continuous dialogue. If a home economics specialist wishes to spend less time as de facto executive secretary for the local homemakers club to deal with other pressing priorities, the best approach to dealing with the likely ensuing conflict with the club would be to place one's values and priorities (which include a healthy autonomy and self-determination for community groups, including homemakers clubs!) squarely on the line for discussion and clarification. In this type of situation, a frank discussion of professional and personal values usually promotes good feeling and good problem-solving.

d) The intervenor should consistently advocate resolution of conflicts or crisis through a process of joint decision-making by the parties. Only through joint decision-making can cooperative, win/win solutions be appropriately promoted. In the dispute over 4-H sex education materials presented at the Zion workshop, a local Roman Catholic priest had threatened to encourage withdrawal of participation of his communicants (with support from his Bishop) if certain materials on family planning were not removed from a widely supported 4-H health project. Forces were marshalled in both the church and the Extension Service statewide. Since both of the major parties are relatively organized and powerful and both placed a high value on continuing to live and work together amicably in the county and throughout the state, the promotion of forums and procedures for getting the parties together as soon as possible would be a highly appropriate intervention strategy for an Extension-

educator. Promoting the involvement of persons at the state level of both the church and Extension in informal mediation meetings could be a strategy. Another could be the provision of a private setting for the local priest and some parishioners (including young people) to jointly analyze specific components of the program (pamphlets or filmstrips, for example). Working on such a joint task would help develop the ability for small groups of the antagonists to work together and would also aid in quelling rumors about the materials -- which often are spread by those who have not seen such materials.

To summarize:

All persons develop and express values. Decisions of professionals -- including those playing the role of "educator" -- are based on their values about principles, parties in the situation, desired outcomes, and/or good process.

Even if the professionals are not aware of their values or believe they are "neutral," their decisions reflect value-positions on the issues at stake and have an impact on the power configuration among the parties involved.

Therefore, Extension workers and other practitioners are not objective, value-free educators. Rather they are professionals who intervene in delicate situations and who hold values regarding objectivity, the worth of educational strategies, democratic decision-making, the worth of the Extension Service, and the desirability of its continued existence.

As such, the best course is for Extension-educators a) to view

themselves as change-agents who are promoting fulfillment of the values of empowerment, justice, and freedom, and b) to be as conscious, open, and explicit about their own values as possible because this stance will promote good problem-solving -- but even more so because it is the right thing to do.

SELECTED RESOURCE MATERIALS
FOR
COPING WITH CONFLICT

A. RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS*

I. GENERAL INTERVENTION AND TRAINING ORGANIZATIONS

1. Community Relations Service, U.S. Department of Justice, 550 11th Street, NW., Washington, D.C. 20530.

Established by the Civil Rights Law of 1964 to mediate and conciliate disputes related to racial discrimination and to facilitate voluntary compliance with the provisions of the law. More than 100 staff members in Washington and 10 regional offices (Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, Kansas City, Dallas, Denver, San Francisco, and Seattle). Intervention upon request or on the agency's initiative. Federal programs liaison. Limited assistance in training. Comprehensive library in Washington. Contact: Jack Dover, Assistant to the Director, (202) 739-4006, or nearest regional office.

2. Community Disputes Services Division, American Arbitration Association, 140 West 51st Street, New York, NY 10020.

Training and intervention services in techniques of mediation for community and racial disputes, with staff members in a number of the AAA's regional offices. Contacts: Joseph Stulberg, Vice President, (212) JU2-6620; William Lincoln, New England Regional Director, (617) 542-2278; local AAA office.

3. Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution, 49 East 68th Street, New York, NY 10021.

Training and intervention services in community and racial disputes, predominantly in the New York area, including a satellite office in Harlem. Extensive training activity nationally in techniques of mediation and conciliation, including a recent emphasis on development and application of inmate grievance procedures. Contact: George Nicolau, Vice President.

II. ORGANIZATIONS WITH SPECIALIZED APPLICATIONS OF INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

1. Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, 2100 K. Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20427.

The major federal agency working in a field of labor-management disputes, with hundreds of staff members spread through regional and subregional offices throughout the country. Predominant activity in mediating, conciliating,

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*This section on Resource Organizations was compiled by Dr. James H. Laue, Director, Center For Metropolitan Studies, University of Missouri, St. Louis.

arbitrating disputes for which the agency has a mandate in federal statutes. Interest in the community and racial dimensions of labor-management disputes. Research department. Contacts: Lawrence Schultz, Director of Arbitration Services, (202) 653-5280; Gerald Barrett, Director of Office of Professional Development, (202) 653-5320; or local FMCS office.

2. Center for Community Justice,
918 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006

Application of techniques of mediation and arbitration to the development of inmate grievance procedures in state and federal correctional institutions--youth and adult, men and women--including California, New York, South Carolina, and other states. Research, training, program development, etc. Contacts: Linda Singer, Director, or Michael Lewis, Deputy Director, (202) 296-2565.

3. University Research Corporation,
5330 Wisconsin, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20015

Under the auspices of the Executive Training Program, research, training, and program development in inmate grievance procedures and the Department of Justice's pilot Neighborhood Justice Centers (in Atlanta, Kansas City, and Los Angeles). Contact: J. Michael Keating, Director.

4. National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice,
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration,
633 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20531

Basic and applied research in police-community relations, court diversion programs, collective violence, intervention techniques, and other areas related to alternatives to force and litigation in the criminal justice system. Contact: Paul Estaver, Program Manager, (202) 376-3723.

5. Office of Environmental Mediation, Institute of Environmental Studies, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98915.

Mediation, training, and limited research services in environmental disputes such as dam construction, mineral rights, air and water pollution issues, highway construction, etc. Intervention capability predominantly in the northwestern states. Contact: Gerald W. Cormick, Director, (206) 543-6713.

6. Department of Law, Justice, and Community Relations, General Board of Church and Society, United Methodist Church,
100 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002

The major conflict intervention organization based in a religious body, with a major focus on involving church members, congregations, and agencies in a "social conflict ministry." Extensive recent activity by the office in connection with Kent State, Jackson State, Wounded Knee, the Longest Walk, and other high visibility events. Thorough files and lists of resources. Limited training capability. Contact: John P. Adams, Director, (202) 488-5653.

7. Community Resources, Limited,
P. O. Box 7174, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108.

Based on extensive experience in school conflicts in the late 1960's and early 1970's, the organization has developed a great deal of materials and models for direct intervention as well as training regarding education and related issues of community development. Research capabilities in a variety of social policy areas and types of methodological approaches. Contact: Marc Chesler, Director, (313) 663-0532.

III. UNIVERSITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

There are a number of study centers and institutes at colleges and universities conducting research, training, and some intervention, most of them cataloged by the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPRED), described in more detail in section IV. Three such organizations are listed here.

1. Center for Peaceful Change,
Kent State University, Kent, Ohio 44242.

Research in community and racial conflict concerning a variety of issues and settings (including international as well as community levels.) Training and limited intervention, mostly in the region. Extensive involvement in the continuing conflicts on the campus. Contact: Dennis Carey, (216) 672-3143.

2. Institute of Behavioral Science,
University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80302.

Research on conflict regulation strategies and techniques, some training and intervention, with a recent focus on environmental issues. Training materials available. Contact: Paul Wehr, (303) 492-8093.

3. Community Conflict Resolution Program,
Center for Metropolitan Studies, University of Missouri-St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri 63121

Evaluation, research, training, and limited direct intervention in general community and racial conflict, correctional institutions, neighborhood disputes, religious organizations, education, desegregation, etc. Informal national clearinghouse function. Contact: James H. Laue, Director, (314) 453-5273.

IV. CLEARINGHOUSE AND REFERRAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. Grassroots Citizen Dispute Resolution Clearinghouse,
American Friends Service Committee, 1300 Fifth Avenue,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219.

Focus on informal research and information-sharing regarding non-litigative, citizen-based processes for resolving community (predominantly on a neighborhood

basis and related to administration of justice issues). Publication of a quarterly newsletter, The Mooter. Contact: Paul Wahrhaftig, (412) 232-3053.

2. Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPRED), Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas 67117.

Clearinghouse for approximately 100 centers, institutes, and programs relating to peace and justice issues, most of them international in their focus. Newsletters, information exchange, conferences. Contact: William Keeney, (316) 283-2500.

V. OTHER RESOURCES

Many resources for assistance in conflict resolution exist in cities throughout the country. In most cases, the city or state Commission on Human Relations or Commission on Human Rights can help. Several thousand members of the National Association of Human Rights Workers are dispersed throughout the United States, often in such commissions and in affirmative action and equal opportunity positions. Local colleges and universities often can help through personnel in their departments of sociology, political science, or psychology, or through programs in peace studies.

Citizen dispute resolution centers have been established and are being tested in a number of cities in addition to Atlanta, Kansas City, and Los Angeles, among them Philadelphia, Orlando, St. Louis, Chicago, and Miami.

There is, in addition, substantial movement toward the establishment of a United States Academy for Peace and Conflict Resolution. Legislation to establish a one-year commission to assess the feasibility of such an academy has passed the United States Senate and currently is under strong consideration in the House of Representatives. For further information on an academy and other developments in the field of conflict resolution, contact Mr. William Spencer, Staff Director, National Peace Academy Campaign, 1625 Eye Street, N.W., Suite 123, Washington, D.C. 20006.

B. AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS

I. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN GROUPS

Dr. Howard Phillips and his associates at Ohio State University have developed three educational modules for community development training programs. These modules are primarily for use with volunteer leaders. One module focuses on conflict management in groups. The first part of this training unit concentrates on understanding conflict. This approach is based upon the concept that when a group understands the nature and scope of a conflict they can devise appropriate solutions or courses of action. The second part deals with several methods of resolving conflict. A cassette slide set contains 140 color slides with tape (23:30 minutes), one leader's guide, and one bulletin entitled "Conflict Management in Groups," EB-628; ESS-552. The cost of one module is $26. For more information contact Dr. Howard Phillips, Professor of Rural Sociology, Department of Agricultural

Economics and Rural Sociology, 2120 Fyffe Road, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210. (Phone 614-422-7911).

II. A CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM: A LEADERS GUIDE FOR EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS

Dr. Jerry W. Robinson, Jr., has developed a conflict management training program for use by extension professionals after participating in a "train-the-trainer" workshop. This training program consists of a leader's guide, a set of 160, 2x2-inch color slides, a set of cassette tapes which are programmed with the slides for individual study purposes, a set of learner activities for the participants, a "participant packet" of reading materials, and detailed instructions for the leader on how to conduct the learner activities. For complete details as to the cost of the material or other information, please write the Northeast Center for Rural Development, 242 Roberts Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850. (Phone 607-256-7743)

C. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY*

I. Boulding, Kenneth E.
1962 Conflict and Defense, A General Theory, New York: Harper Torchbooks, Harper and Row, Publishers.

Chapter 15: "Conflict Resolution and Control" (305-328)
This chapter examines the practical implications of the theory of conflict, and deals with the ways in which conflicts are resolved: avoidance, some form of procedural resolution (reconciliation, compromise, or award), violence.

II. Coleman, James S.
1957 "Community Conflict." New York: The Free Press. (Monograph)

Coleman examines the processes underlying community controversy and attempts to construct a foundation upon which a theory of community controversy may be built. He discusses the types of events which lead to conflict, the conditions for controversy, and general patterns in the initiation of controversy. He then looks at the dynamics of controversy, factors affecting the course of controversy, and the underlying premises and research problems.

III. Cook, James B.
1975 "Compromise, Conflict and Perspective." Intensive Training Program for Non-Metropolitan Development.

Cook outlines the resolution of controversy through conflict, compromise, and perspective.
"In the conflict model, attempts are made to eliminate all but one point of view. Compromise uses only part of the diversity. Developing perspective can actually lead to resolution which makes use of the differences among the points of view in combination--actually more than the simple sum of the original positions."

*This annotated bibliograph was prepared by Dr. Cathy Moody and Dr. Howard Phillips, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Ohio State University, for an IS-USDA Special Project.

IV. Coser, Lewis A., and Bernard Rosenberg
1964 Sociological Theory: A Book of Readings. New York: The Macmillan Company, Second Edition.

"The Functions of Social Conflict" (Coser) pp. 205-209.
Coser discusses six functions of social conflict:

1. Conflict permits internal dissension and dissatisfaction to rise to the surface and enables a group to restructure itself or deal with dissatisfactions.
2. Conflict provides for the emergence of new norms of appropriate behavior by surfacing shortcomings.
3. Conflict provides means of ascertaining the strength of current power structures.
4. Conflict works to strengthen the boundaries between groups--bringing out their distinctiveness.
5. Conflict creates bonds between loosely structured groups--unifying dissident and unrelated elements.
6. Conflict works as a stimulus to reduce stagnation. Conflict may alter society.

V. Fisher, Ronald J., and James H. White
1976 "A perspective Model: Intergroup Conflicts Resolved by Outside Consultants." Journal of Community Development Society. Vol. 7. No. 1 (88-89).

Presents two case studies and a model for action by third-party consultants.

Third party consultation plays a useful role for community developers because it promotes the productive resolution of intergroup conflict in community settings. Two related case studies of third-party consultation between conflicting groups in the same neighborhood illustrates a descriptive model. Initially, the impartial consultants facilitated, small group, problem-solving discussions between a recreation group, mainly identified with public housing tenants, and a political group, primarily representing private home owners. Consultations resulted in a joint proposal for a community center. This led to a conflict between proponents and opponents which became the focus for a second, but unsuccessfuly, intervention. The authors analyze the case studies in terms of the major components of the model and in terms of relevant principles of social psychology. They discuss the implications for the practice of third-party consultation by community developers.

VI. From: Hawley, Willis D. and Frederick M. Wirt (eds.), 1968. The Search for Community Power. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. (250-260).

Gamson, William A.
"Rancorous Conflict in Community Politics"

The article reports a study of conflict in 18 New England communities. Nine communities in which community conflicts are often rancorous or hostile are compared with an equal number of communities in which rancorous conflict is rare. Gamson studied 54 different issues, including fluoridation of water systems (which arose in all 18 cities), as well as education, zoning, and community development.

Gamson seeks to identify factors which might explain the different ways the communities handle conflict. He does not explicitly consider the relationship between the nature of conflict and the patterns of community influence. Such studies provide groundwork upon which such relationships can be formulated.

VII. From: Ralph M. Kramer, and Harry Specht (eds.) Readings in Community Organization Practice. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. pp. 327-337

Mack, Raymond W.
"The Components of Social Conflict"

Mack contends that the analysis of social conflict is a neglected area of sociological endeavor. He discusses the difference between conflict and competition and presents several generalizations about intergroup conflict:

"Conflict promotes the formation of groups...conflict also destroys groups."

VIII. Robinson, Jerry W., Jr.
1972 "The Management of Conflict." Journal of Community Development Society. Vol. 3, No. 2 (100-105).

This paper defines conflict as "a social process resulting from threats by one party to another party" (101), and provides a framework for dealing with conflict in social change.

"How would you like to work for the 'Conflict Extension Service'?" p. 100.

"Not all conflict is bad and not all cooperation is good." p. 101.

"Conflict often becomes a 'creative tension' which can be managed--managed because seldom is conflict finally 'resolved'." p. 101.

"Conflict can be good or bad. One of our tendencies may be to label it as bad. Conflict may be a liability when it causes inactivity, diverted activity, confusion, stress and violence. Let's remember, however, that conflict can be good. It identifies problems, generates learning, often causes creativity, introduces needed changes and results in individual, group, and system growth." p. 104.

IX. Robinson, Jerry W., Jr., and Roy A. Clifford
1974 "Conflict Management in Community Groups." University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. North-Central Regional Extension Publication No. 36-5.

A learning module on conflict management.

X. From: Fred M. Cox, et al., Strategies of Community Organizations, A Book of Readings. F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 171-178.

Schaller, Lyle S.
"Conflict Over Conflict:

Schaller presents arguments favoring the use of conflict as a technique for organizing a community and for accelerating the pace of social change. He also presents several arguments against the use of conflict in the community organization process.

XI. Schilit, Henrietta
1974 "Coping With Community Crisis: New Rules, New Roles for Conflict Resolution." Journal of Community Development Society, Vol. 5,

Techniques used in labor disputes offer potential in community problem solving. Shilit discusses the work of the Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution, an independent organization in New York, functioning in the area of community disputes resolution and training. She discusses the transferability of collective bargaining to community disputes, and the role of the community developer in conflict resolution.

XII. Schmidt, Stuart M., and Thomas A. Kochan
"Conflict: Toward Conceptual Clarity, " Administrative Science Quarterly.

This paper distinguishes conflict from competition in the intra-organizational context and presents a behavioral conceptualization of the process of conflict. It is proposed that goal incompatibility, perceived opportunity for interference and interdependent activities among organizational subunits increase the potential for conflict. This conceptual scheme is then applied to a situation involving city government officials engaged in bargaining with a city employee union.

XIII. In response to article by William Bizek and Jerry Cederblom (Fall, 1973, Journal), "Community Development and Social Justice."

Steuart, Guy W.
1974 "Conflict, Social Justice and Neutrality, A Critique and an Alternative." Journal of Community Development Society, Vol. 5, No. 1 (5-9).

This normative neutrality of community development practice needs to be strengthened rather than weakened. The neutralist position is peculiarly appropriate for dealing with community conflict provided the consultation offered to client groups is socially and politically comprehensive and relevant to an historical context. It is both presumptuous and unnecessary for the profession as such to develop normative principles of social justice as guidelines for practice or for the selection of client groups.

XIV. Thullen, Manfred
1975 "Alternative Approaches to Development." A paper presented at the North Central Region Intensive Training Program for Non-Metropolitan Development.

This paper outlines twelve alternative approaches to community development. Each approach uses the community problem solving process to varying extent and all are aimed at improving communities. The approaches discussed are: 1) The "Community" Approach, 2) The "Education" Approach, 3) the "Human Resource Development" Approach, 4) the "Planning, Design and Architectural" Approach, 5) The "Community Facilities Improvement and Physical Development" Approach, 6) The "Economic Development" Approach, 7) the "Regional Development" Approach, 8) The "Power Structure" Approach, 9) The "Helping the Disadvantaged" Approach, 10) The "Conflict" Approach, 11) The "Radical Change" or "Reform" Approach, 12) The "Revolution" or "Total Change" Approach.

Thullen then classifies (based on Warren) three major alternative approaches to development efforts: 1) "Collaborative Strategies", 2) "Campaign Strategies", and 3) "Contest Strategies."

XV. Walton, Richard E. and John M. Dutton
"The Management of Interdepartmental Conflict: A Model and Review" Administrative Science Quarterly.

A general model of interdepartmental conflict and its management is presented, together with a review of the relevant literature. The model integrates the contextual determinants of organizational conflict emphasized by sociologists and the dynamics of conflictful relationships studies by social psychologists. The general feedback linkage in the model is provided by the adaptive and maladaptive reactions of higher executives' to conflict and the consequences of conflict between units. Each of these several aspects of the model has implications for a strategy of modifying interdepartmental patterns.

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